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The Lost World Of Liberalism:

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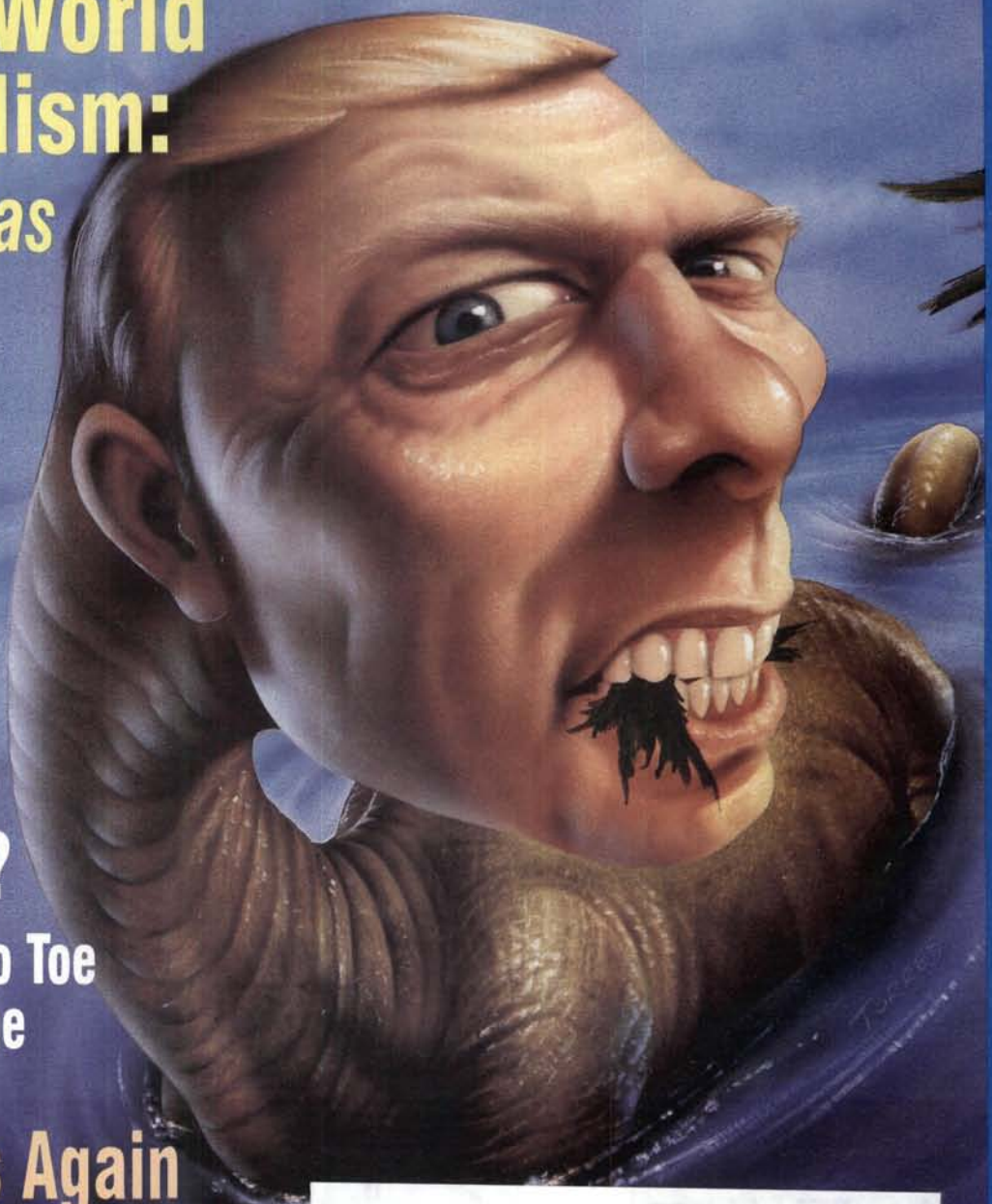
Should Republicans Back the Budget Deal?

Dick Morris Toe to Toe With Kate O'Beirne

Titanic Sinks Again

Jeffrey Hart • John Bloom



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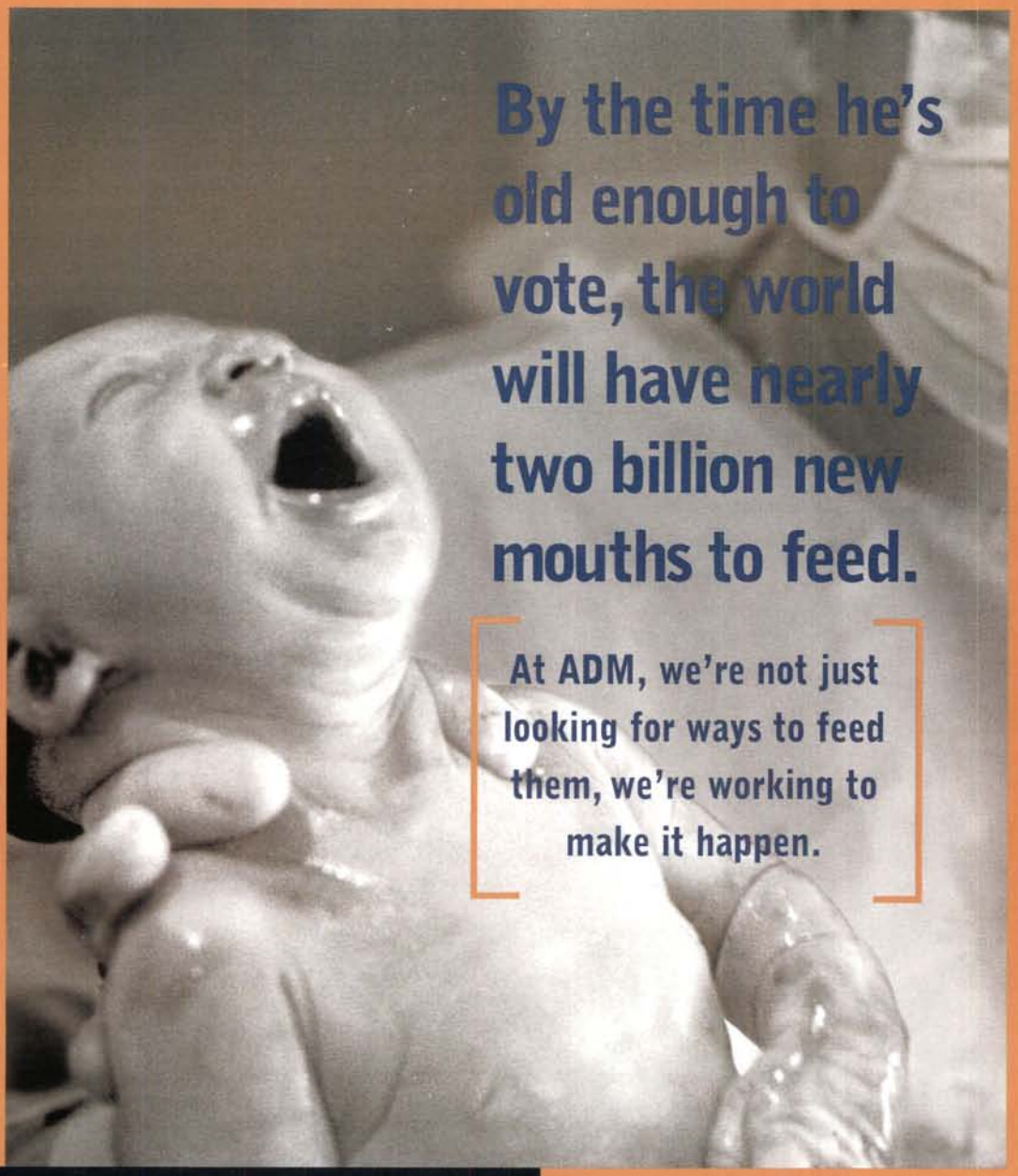
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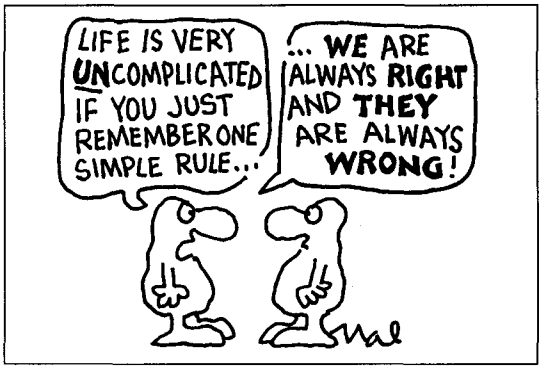

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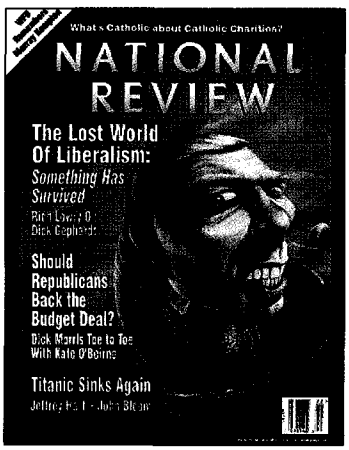
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LETTERS

Ethnic Grievance, Part II

I am writing to protest your magazine's May 5 cover depiction of Ralph Reed and Dick Gephardt with grotesque eyes and stereotypical garb, and Pat Buchanan in an apparent general's outfit. This is not only an obvious insult to large-eyed Americans, but also to all Americans who've ever worn the uniform of a general.

Scott A. Hogenson
Woodbridge, Va.

The cover depicting Pat Buchanan in grotesque 5 o'clock shadow and stereotypical garb, and Ralph Reed and Dick Gephardt with bugged blue eyes is in poor taste and a disgusting insult to all Caucasian-Americans, especially Irish-Americans.

Col. James E. Lalley, Ret.
Sioux City, Iowa

As an Anglo-American, I am writing to protest your magazine's cover depicting white males with grotesque (and in Pat Buchanan's case, filthy) buckteeth and stereotypical garb. I found this to be completely offensive and in poor taste. In addition, as an animal lover, I found Roman Genn's depiction of John Major as a helpless turtle on page 26 of the same issue to be completely offensive and in poor taste. Turtles are fine creatures and make spectacular pets. You should be ashamed!

Phil Childress
Atlanta, Ga.

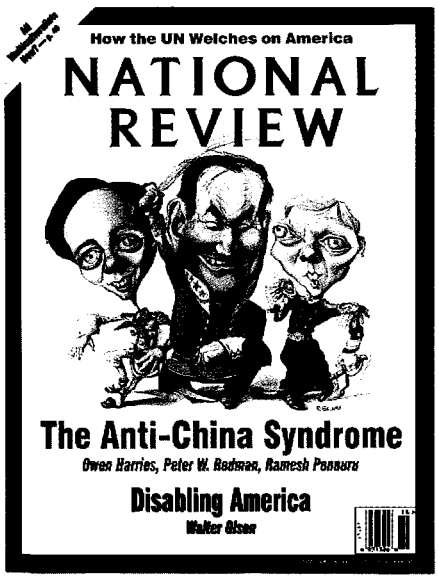
As a member of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Community, I found the cover art which depicts Ralph Reed and Richard Gephardt with grotesque blue eyes and Pat Buchanan in stereotypical military garb and which portrays all of them as jingoistic imperialists, to be a disgusting insult to all European-Americans. If your past behavior is any indication, I expect no apology to this much-maligned ethnic group, which of late has endured unrelenting persecution. Furthermore, my wife, who is also a member of this community, has not even seen the cover and she is offended.

Bryan Keith Morris
Chesapeake, Va.

The Ups and Downs of Divorce

As always, John J. DiIulio Jr. makes a powerful argument on the harm of divorce ["Deadly Divorce," April 7]. However, there is one methodological problem encountered by studies of divorce that, while avoidable in principle, may in practice always cast a shadow of doubt over any conclusions based on them. The problem is not doubt about the pathologies associated with divorce; the problem concerns the question of to whom the parents/children of divorce are to be compared.

The implicit comparison is of parents/children of divorce with parents/children in intact families. But common sense tells us that families where the parents wind up divorcing would exhibit greater pathologies even if the parents had decided against divorce. The strains that generated the divorce would surely have had effects that would differentiate these families from



those in which the idea of divorce was never entertained.

Were there some practical way of comparing the parents/children of divorce with parents/children in families with similar strains but where the parents did not divorce we might (or might not) find even greater pathology than is caused by divorce. That this is the rationalization used by divorcing parents ("It's better for the kids") does not mean that it is untrue (nor, of course, does it mean that it *is* true).

No doubt, an important advantage of "staying together" is the continuing sanctioning effect of the father on the children, even if all else is an emotional hell. But it is not self-evident that even this is (or is not) desirable in a father who is experiencing the emotions, and is the target of the emotions, that lead to divorce.

Steven Goldberg
New York, N.Y.

Leaving aside the many problems with the conclusions that Mr. DiIulio draws from divorce research, I just want to express my utter astonishment at his view that being married provides a source of "unconditional love." Has Mr. DiIulio ever been married to a human female? In my marriage I could not even get unconditional liking; indeed, only rarely could I get liking of any kind. I agree that divorce may cause serious problems for children (the only children of my failed marriage were canine, and they don't seem to miss my ex), but it is a huge and completely unjustified leap from that premise to the conclusion that divorce should be proscribed or severely limited. I have no doubt that I will live a far longer and almost infinitely happier life without my ex than I would have had we been forced to remain together.

Steven M. Cooper
Bedford, Tex.

Mr. Goldberg's reasonable concerns are addressed by the quasi-experimental research designs employed in many of the over one hundred studies that constitute the empirical literature on the costly consequences of divorce. Mr. Cooper's reasonable concerns are addressed by my unconditionally loved and loving female wife of 17 years, who advises him to get and keep another dog, bitch or not. —JJD

Life after Reagan

John O'Sullivan's "After Reaganism" [April 21] will become a classic in contemporary political thought. True to *NR*'s splendid tradition, it takes a big step toward re-invigorating, once more, American conservatism. This intellectual rehabilitation is urgent, not because our conservative movement is at risk, but because our Republic is drifting toward political deconstruction. To halt and reverse this drift requires a sustained policy of reaction by American conservatives for whom "reaction" is not a pejorative.

Mr. O'Sullivan awakens us to the fact that the Reagan era is a period in recent American history—a splendid period, to be sure, but not a philosophical paradigm for all ages. While Reagan's optimism was an expression of self-confidence and winning ideas, the utopianism that has since infested conservative thought is, in effect, defeatist since it opens the floodgates to the utopiansim of the Left. Since lower taxes will guarantee perpetual economic growth, why worry that current immigration flows are importing poverty? Since NAFTA will

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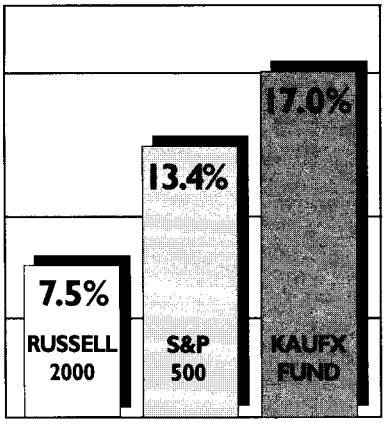

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transform Mexico into a super-sized Arizona, why fret about bilingualism? Since the world is becoming like America, why fight multiculturalism?

The utopian infestation is in part attributable to our best friends, as Mr. O'Sullivan gently suggests—the libertarians and neoconservatives. American libertarianism has become a school of political thought whose admirable clarity and coherence make it all the more seductive. It is instructive to re-read Hayek's "Why I Am Not a Conservative." He sees in conservatism a "proneness to a strident nationalism" which is a "source of its weakness in the struggle of ideas." But, in fact, to struggle against bad ideas, people have to draw strength from their own culture and their local political experience (call this "nationalism"). The global free market, now so admired as the road to global utopia, will be incapable of sorting out political, religious, and cultural ideas and hence cannot separate wisdom and rectitude from foolishness and vice.

Fred C. Iklé
Bethesda, Md.

Mr. O'Sullivan offers an insightful analysis of the tactics of liberalism and the inability of many conservatives to resist. I vigorously object, however, to his assertion that "there are marked utopian strains in . . . conservative thought. . . . clearest in libertarianism . . ." While some self-professed libertarians have waxed utopian, most notably the Ayn Rand fan club, libertarianism as a political philosophy is decidedly not utopian. It recognizes that government is the only sector of society with a monopoly on the legal use of force. That's why genuine libertarians seek to limit the role of government to areas where force is appropriate, much like St. Paul conceding the right of the state to "wield the sword." Most libertarians distinguish between political and moral authority. Since most of society's problems are of a moral nature, the use of political authority only serves to exacerbate them, and libertarianism holds that most social problems are a result of passing individual responsibility to collective entities. Libertarians may sometimes sound utopian, but their basic philosophy considers utopianism to be synonymous with statism and collectivism.

Robert Maynard
Colchester, Vt.

I was inspired and deeply moved by Mr. O'Sullivan's piece. In the midst of his clear thinking, however, there is an important, though common, error: Social harmony is not easier to achieve in times of prosperity, despite the wishes of the tax-cutting Republicans. In fact, social harmony is highest during times of national distress, when it becomes clear that everyone must bond together to save the nation. Bill Bennett likes to counter excuses for ghetto crime with statistics that show much lower crime rates during the Great Depression. During World War II there was no patience with social protests. Otto von Bismarck applied this principle most dramatically in 1870 when he sought to unify Germany by starting a war with France.

When modern liberal groups hold rallies for the cause du jour, you might ask how all those people can afford to waste an afternoon doing essentially nothing. Only America's fantastic prosperity makes this possible. In a true economic downturn, there is no time for agitators to do their mischief. Everyone is working.

Ben Bateman
Austin, Tex.

British Fatalism?

Mark Steyn's "Setting Sun" [May 5] surely deconstructs itself. Mr. Steyn obviously thinks the British electorate ought to be grateful for a government that has given it private phone lines. Then he goes on about the soaring crime rate. Could it not be that the electorate has decided to punish a government that refuses to face the facts on crime? He thinks only "British fatalism" can explain the lack of reaction over the European Union fisheries and agricultural disasters. Isn't the electorate punishing the government that supinely acquiesced in them? And he tells us British Telecom is now a world-beating, American-swallowing organization, but "all the British do is gripe." So who runs British Telecom, eh? Immigrant Bulgarians? There's a serious point about this election, which is that maybe it's *not* the economy, stupid. Pity Steyn missed it.

Tom Shippey
Webster Groves, Mo.

Miraculous

I must demur to D. Keith Mano's belief ["The Bethsaida Miracle," April 21] that the fact that Jesus in Mark 8: 22-25 had to cure not only a man's blindness, but also his inability to interpret what he saw, proves that the miracle actually happened. It does prove that Mark wasn't just an ignorant peasant who made up stories—but people back then were less ignorant than they are often assumed to be today.

Don Schenk
Allentown, Pa.

What a delightful surprise to find the Mano byline again adorning the pages of *NR*. Mr. Mano's prose was a sharpened sword which cut deliciously into the soft flesh of liberalism. Welcome back, old friend. But dare I suggest that Mano's blade may not have quite the keenness of yesteryear? In discussing so untrendy a subject as the legitimacy of Christ's miracles, the old Mano might have led off with a pithy comment about modern man's hidebound philistinism, his adherence to materialism, while giving credence to just about any extraterrestrial phenomenon to come down the pike. And there are many examples of modern miracles. Teresa Neumann fasted for the last 32 years of her life, yet gained over thirty pounds; there are saints lying incorrupt in their graves, some of them, like Bernadette Soubirous (d. 1879), exposed to public view.

H. V. Nussey
San Diego, Calif.

Liberalism Renewed?

Kate O'Beirne ["Bread & Circuses," April 21] sings the praises of the proposed American Community Renewal Act. Contained in this bill are a further muddling of the federal tax code, federal participation in drug rehabilitation, increased federal involvement in local education, and mandates on state and local governments in order to qualify for federal largesse. Since when is conservative social engineering preferable to the liberal variety? There is another way to help areas with high unemployment and poverty. Why not exempt everyone in these depressed communities from all federal income taxes, no strings attached, and let the market do its work?

Mark Johnson
Somonauk, Ill.

With a Republican Congress committing mortal sins in its expansion of government, I confess to a venial offense in the interest of proving that conservative solutions work. —KO'B

Roll the Dice

While no one questions the social costs of compulsive gambling, Ben C. Toledano's "Mississippi Gambles" [April 7] seems badly misguided. What we get is a look at the process of how gaming came to the state, but no comment on the effect it has had. The proof, however, is in the final product. As Mr. Toledano notes, since gaming came to Mississippi, "fewer people are on welfare and more have jobs."

I cannot recall another time when an *NR* article criticized a regulatory agency for being too supportive of the industry it regulates. Unlike some other states, Mississippi took the pro-consumer approach, letting the free market determine how many riverboat casinos there would be, even though this meant that some would fail.

Ronald J. Rychlak
University, Miss.

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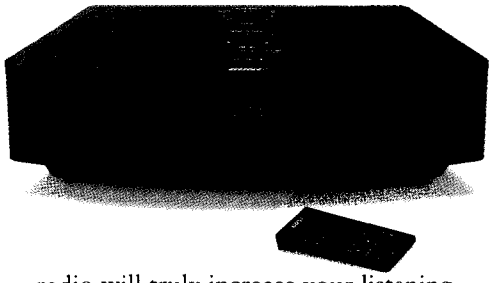

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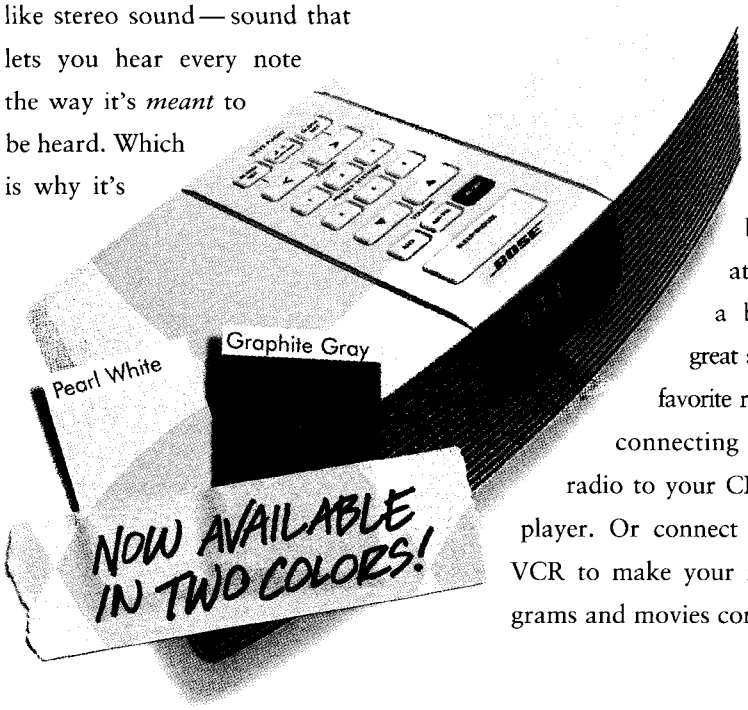

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FROM THE EDITOR

Tragedy at the Polls, Comedy on Stage

■ Both Anthony Lejeune, whose post-election analysis appears on page 30, and Mark Steyn last issue, predicted the results of Britain's election in *NR*. But the prize for the most interesting mini-forecast goes to Mr. Steyn, who three weeks before the polling wrote: "This election will have a low turnout, and it will be lost by the party whose apathetics are the best organized."

In a London *Times* article, former Irish Prime Minister Garrett Fitzgerald points out that the popular vote fell a full 6 per cent from 1992, to 71 per cent (a low turnout by British standards). Within this reduced total, moreover, the most striking trend was not an increase in Labour support—Labour received fewer votes than the Conservatives did in John Major's narrow 1992 victory—but the collapse in Tory support.

Of about four and a half million lost Tory votes, Fitzgerald estimates persuasively that one and a half million went to Labour, one million went to anti-Europe independents, and a full two million simply stayed home. No Labour landslide, but a Tory negative landslide. The result demonstrated for the umpteenth time that moderate "centrist" conservatism (i.e., liberalism) loses elections.

When it comes to scaring up apathy, no one can match John Major—except perhaps George Bush.

■ A recent *NR* cover caused some controversy. I refer, of course, to Roman Genn's portrayal of four suffragettes carrying banners that demanded "Voter Fraud for Women."

This was a comment on the fact that the recent elections in Louisiana and California in which voter fraud was convincingly alleged had been "won" by women candidates.

A touch over the top? Rash? Hasty? Ill-judged? Sexist?

Well, I might be inclined to yield on this point—if Sen. Dianne Feinstein had not asserted that the reason Woody Jenkins and Bob Dornan were challenging the results is that "Hell hath no fury like a man beaten by a woman."

There is no evidence for this, and a mountain of evidence that the elections were stolen. Sen. Feinstein is effectively saying that women may not be charged with rigging elections—except presumably by other women.

Call it sexism; call it affirmative action; call it benefit of clergy; I call it: Life Outdistances Satire, #237.

■ "He wears his lightness learnedly," said somebody about somebody else. And the impression grows on me that this is true of our entire civilization.

Take, for instance, the Broadway musical. In a very funny outing as *NR*'s theater critic, John Bloom reviews the new musical *Titanic* and concludes that it isn't as bad as it might have been.

What it is, however, is somewhat too heavy for its form. Like many recent musicals, it relies not on girls, gags, and guffaws, but on special effects, semi-operatic scores, and serious themes (presidential assassinations, the French Revolution, the Vietnam War, etc., etc.).

For those who like that sort of thing, that is the sort of thing they like. But when it comes to musicals, the real thing is a work of wit, melody, and levitation.

This was brought home to me last week by the New York City Center's concert performance of *The Boys from Syracuse*, by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart (book by George Abbott "out of Shakespeare," as the players reminded us during the weaker coincidences).

I was alternately amused and charmed by a briskly funny plot, witty lyrics, and wonderful melodies (some familiar, like "Sing for Your Supper," others unknown to me, like "You Have Cast Your Shadow on the Sea").

Today's audience loved it; even the actors seemed to be having a good time. And please don't tell me that a lighthearted new musical would not work in an age of AIDS and genocide. *The Boys from Syracuse* was written in 1938.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

NATIONAL REVIEW

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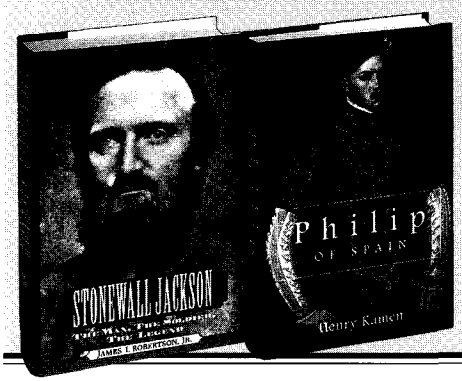

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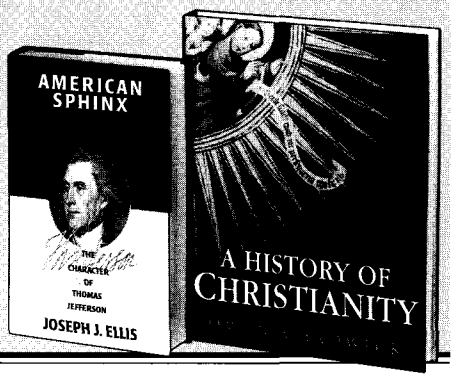

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FOR THE RECORD

■ Latest CNN/*USA Today* poll finds understandable skepticism about the budget deal: 81 per cent of people say the budget will definitely or probably not be balanced in the year 2002; only 16 per cent think it probably will be balanced, and 1 per cent say it definitely will. . . . In *Time*/CNN poll, 50 per cent of respondents say the deal doesn't cut government enough. . . . Disputing notion that former **Clinton** advisor **Dick Morris** served as intermediary between Clinton and **Trent Lott** during budget talks, a Lott spokesman says: "Lott is not denying that Morris is calling, and when he is here, he takes the calls. But he is not an intermediary between Lott and Clinton. He calls the President and the President calls him." . . . Former White House adviser **George Stephanopoulos** says deal "will probably reassure [*sic*] the election [of the] Republican Congress in 1998."

■ House Government Reform and Oversight Committee Chairman **Dan Burton** says payments to **Webster Hubbell** in 8-month period after his resignation from Justice Department may go as high as $1 million. . . . *Blood Sport* author **James Stewart** asks of stone-walling Whitewater witness **Susan McDougal**: "In the wake of all this talk about Hubbell and how the White House may have helped Hubbell, does she have some expectation that she is going to be rewarded for her silence?" . . . Liberal *New York Times* columnist **A. M. Rosenthal** concludes that both the Clintons are lying on Whitewater. . . . *New York Post* reports that there are seven government-funded lawyers doing scandal work at the White House, running up a bill as high as $500,000 or even $1 million, at taxpayers' expense. . . . Meanwhile, Democratic attack dog **David Bonior** ostensibly calls off ethics war on **Newt Gingrich**: "The Speaker was caught violating House rules and he was punished for it and we see no reason to dwell on this. We're going to move on to other issues."

■ Dick Morris says **Bob Dole** could have turned around his 1996 campaign had he picked **Bill Bennett** as his running mate, thereby blunting the Clinton values message: "It's fair to say Bennett's ideas had a great deal to do with what Clinton did in '96; it was fundamental to my thinking and the campaign's thinking." . . . Full-page ad in *New York Times* for **Earl Graves**'s book *How to Succeed in Business without Being White* includes blurbs from **Spike Lee**, **Jesse Jackson**, **Andrew Young**, **Kweisi Mfume**, **Carol Moseley-Braun**—and **Colin Powell** and **Jack Kemp**. "A clarion call for African-Americans," says Powell. "A moving testament," chimes in Kemp. . . . *Washington Post* poll finds that black residents of Washington, D.C., favor death penalty for police killers by 2 to 1 margin, and are more likely than whites to support death penalty for other crimes. . . . People for the American Way runs ads in Baltimore newspapers, on radio stations, and on buses disparaging Christian Coalition–sponsored Congress on Racial Justice and Reconciliation held there.

■ Ex-Rep. **Randy Tate** (R., Wash.) and **Arthur Rhodes**, chief of staff to Rep. **Mike Parker** (R., Miss.), are reportedly on list of potential replacements for **Ralph Reed** as executive director of Christian Coalition. . . .

". . . and this one is for winning a battle with the media."

Rep. **Chris Shays** (R., Conn.) and Sen. **Jim Jeffords** (R., Vt.) prepare to introduce the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, outlawing employment discrimination against gays. The gay-activist Log Cabin Republican group figures it has the votes to pass the bill out of Jeffords's Labor and Human Resources Committee, but worries about the House. . . . Using the state's domestic-violence law, New Mexico judge orders a fifth-grade boy to stop seeing his girlfriend after their schoolyard mock marriage turns sour.

■ Gov. **Christine Todd Whitman** is considered likely to veto a partial-birth abortion ban if it passes the New Jersey State Senate. . . . The old and the new: **John Dingell** (D., Mich.), 42-year House veteran, looks likely to run again in 1998, while Denver Broncos quarterback **John Elway**, a Republican, is reportedly exploring idea of eventually running for Congress. . . . **Dick Gephardt** on campaign-finance reform: "What we have is two important values in conflict: freedom of speech and our desire for healthy campaigns and a healthy democracy. You can't have both." . . . *NR*'s **John O'Sullivan** and **Jeffrey Hart** debate *The Nation* (led by **Katha Pollitt**) on proposition: "Resolved: Government Funding for the Arts Should Be Abolished." Sunday, June 7, at Berkshire Theatre Festival in Stockbridge, Mass. For tickets call 413-298-5536.

■ Attorney General **Janet Reno** confirms *Washington Post* story that FBI is investigating possibility that Israelis have a spy code-named "Mega" in U.S. Government. Israeli officials say rumor stems from mistranslation of an electronic intercept in Hebrew between Mossad Washington and headquarters in Tel Aviv. . . . **Vladimir Zhirinovsky**, leader of Russia's ultranationalists, attacked a TV crew while police stood by when he was refused admission by Pres. **Boris Yeltsin**'s security guard to a wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the end of World War II outside the Kremlin walls. Zhirinovsky has parliamentary immunity and probably won't be charged.

■ **Jay Leno** says new movie *Commandments* is "about a guy who sets out to break all ten of the Ten Commandments. In fact, once he gets past eight, they make him an honorary **Kennedy**."

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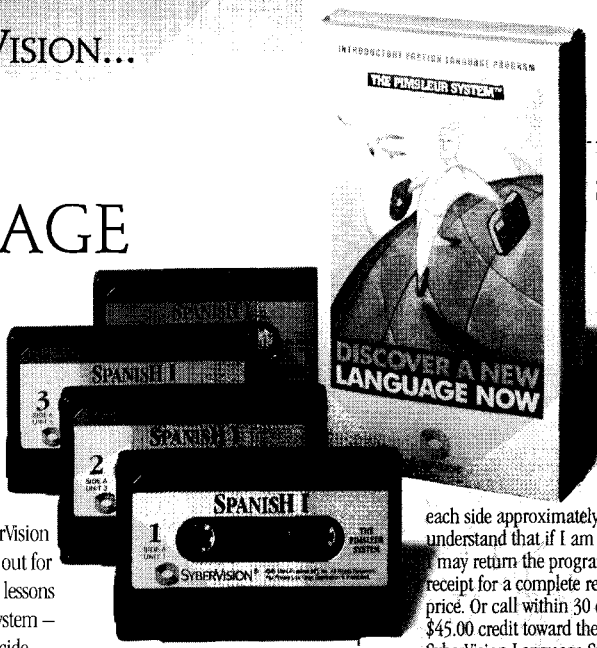

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THE WEEK

■ The "budget deal" was in the news this week, as if anything the government ever attached either word to, was.

■ Being a disgraced Clinton official is one of the more lucrative jobs in Washington. It earned Webb Hubbell at least $400,000 and perhaps as much as $1 million in an eight-month period. Was this "hush money" to keep him from cooperating with Ken Starr? No, no, the White House assures us. *Defense #1:* President Clinton, asked at a January press conference about a Lippo Group payment to Hubbell, said, "We did not know anything about it." *Reality:* Lippo honcho James Riady was hanging out with Clinton in the days before the Hubbell arrangement, and with other Clinton associates for whom finding "work" for Hubbell was a favorite pastime. *Defense #2:* Everyone was just trying to help out an old friend. *Reality:* Some of those involved in fashioning Hubbell's golden parachute, like Erskine Bowles—then head of the Small Business Administration, now White House chief of staff—knew him only slightly. (And if the payments were an exercise in compassion, why didn't the White House brag about them instead of hiding them?) *Defense #3:* No one at the White House knew Hubbell was in serious trouble with the law, and so there was nothing strange in finding "work" for him. *Reality:* Two close Clinton associates knew the seriousness of the charges, and in fact worked to persuade the White House that Hubbell needed to resign. *Defense #4:* There is nothing to hush up. *Reality:* On another Whitewater front, the Administration is struggling to withhold from investigators the content of two conversations between White House lawyers and Hillary Clinton (who Starr says has changed her sworn testimony over time). What is so unnecessary to hush up that the White House will go to such lengths to keep it secret?

■ On Sunday, May 11, Newt Gingrich appeared on *Meet The Press* and gave a forthright statement of his position on discrimination against whites: he favors it, apparently indefinitely. Mr. Gingrich posited that a poor black child has fewer opportunities than a middle-class white child. He added that we need "affirmative action" until we can "reach out" to the black child, and he denounced the "Right" for forgetting about "outreach," which he did not offer to define. When would "affirmative action" cease to be necessary? Plato knew (see *The Republic*) that total equality of opportunity cannot be achieved without the abolition of that engine of inequality, the family. Will the Speaker add that to the Contract for 1998?

■ Presidents Bill Clinton and Ernesto Zedillo met in Mexico City to offer a gloomy assessment of the war on drugs. America has "less than 5 per cent of the world's population," admitted Mr. Clinton, yet "we consume half the drugs. . . . We have not succeeded in reducing the demand or completely controlling the border on our side." Indeed, the picture the two presidents painted was, if anything, rosy. A joint communiqué denied that drug traffickers exercise political control in Mexico, and that the drug trade has an impact on Mexico's economy, though sober analysts insist on both. Unmentioned in the appraisals and the plans: the American drug laws, which equate the mildest illegal drugs, like marijuana, with the worst, and which rely on prohibition for dealing with both. It is no mean feat for a policy to clog the courts and jails of one country, and undermine the institutions of another. If Mexico topples, how many illegal immigrants will there be? Shouldn't conservatives take a second look at drug laws, if only out of concern for border control?

■ The Environmental Protection Agency is melting down, pressing ahead with ever more stringent standards and alienating its former champions in Congress. The latest is the filing of an "any credible evidence" rule under the Clean Air Act. In a paper for the Washington Legal Foundation, attorney Michael Levin says the issue has gone largely unnoticed in the media because of its "mind-bending technical nature," but it has huge implications. Existing "reference test" standards are based on averaging emissions under typical operating conditions. Levin says the EPA's move to throw out the existing set of standards in favor of an "any credible evidence" approach is "essentially lawless" since it will leave emissions standards undefined and the basis for judging compliance unknowable. Sen. John Chafee, the Rhode Island Republican en-

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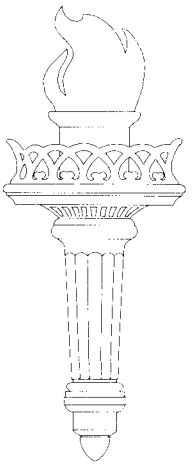

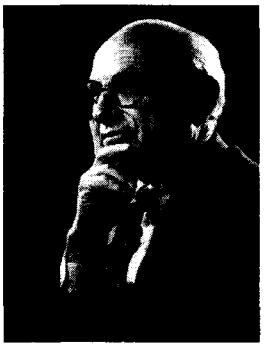

Milton Friedman

Two of America's intellectual giants — Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman and historian Gertrude Himmelfarb — have been honored for their contributions to scholarship by the John Templeton Foundation.

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Dr. Friedman, perhaps the most important economist of the last half-century, received the $25,000 Lifetime Achievement Award. Dr. Himmelfarb, one of America's most distinguished historians, received the $25,000 award for Outstanding Contemporary Book for her *The De-Moralization of Society.*

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vironmentalist, has told EPA Administrator Carol Browner that the future of her agency is at risk if it continues on its present course.

■ Following a rash of cop-killings and, more significantly, a shift in public opinion, Marion Barry, mayor of Washington, D.C., now supports the death penalty, but only for those convicted of killing an officer in the line of duty. Barry's former blanket opposition to the death penalty was philosophically consistent. His new insistence that executions be limited to cop-killers seems arbitrary, as do his stated reasons for the about-face, which are not justice, retribution, or deterrence, but bringing D.C. laws into line with those of Maryland, Virginia, and the Federal Government. (Never mind that Maryland and Virginia execute civilian-killers, too.)

■ With federal agents surrounding his compound, Republic of Texas leader Richard McLaren fancied himself the next Randy Weaver or David Koresh—right-wing eccentric attacked by totalitarian Washington. But McLaren's hostage-taking is more evocative of the Túpac Amaru, his check-kiting recalls the 103rd Congress, and he has filed more niggling lawsuits than the ACLU. For years, the "Republic" sued neighbors, who had to surrender land in exchange for an end to the legal harassment. Some of them *wanted* McLaren to suffer a Koresh-like fate. But his end will be more fitting: the legal system he exploited to torment others will at last be turned on him. Just the ambush he deserves.

■ June 5 is the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, announced by Secretary of State George C. Marshall in a commencement speech at Harvard. But as *Harvard* magazine recounts, some things about the government never seem to change. Before Marshall's speech, journalists from several prominent newspapers asked the State Department press office whether he would announce any new initiatives worth covering. They were told no.

■ The man-versus-machine chess match between Garry Kasparov and Deep Blue was bait for yokels. The computer is a machine, but without a program designed by humans it would be dumb. The programmers also had the advantage of studying thousands of Kasparov's games, while he had no access to the computer's program. This "match" proves nothing, except that the spirit of Phineas T. Barnum is alive and well.

■ In San Francisco, everybody who is anybody in the Democratic Party turned out to celebrate the big 5-0 for Jack Davis, local political guru. It was the kind of blast that only the morally advanced can appreciate in full. According to newspaper accounts, "On stage, male and female strippers gyrated to hard rock pumped through a sound system donated by Bill Graham Presents. At the center of the ballroom, booze flowed from the bar used in the alien disco scene in *Star Wars*. Guests got tattoos, had odd things sewn onto their skin," and waved "inflatable plastic penises." None of this, however, compared to the "main event"—a "blood and urine" show in which a trussed-up guy had a satanic star carved into his back, then . . . We can't go on. "It was so disgusting, I thought it was funded by the NEA," said San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey. So it goes among the Democrats—when they are not pursuing Newt Gingrich with ethics charges for teaching a college course in Americanism.

■ Having failed to find extraterrestrials on the surfaces of other planets, scientists now hope to discover life below the surface, in subterranean lakes warmed by the planets' interior heat. Should their search prove successful, expect a chorus of intellectuals to cheer the discovery as proof that man is a cosmic accident, and therefore morally free. A lonely few will marvel at the wonder of God's creation. But we just hope the critters taste good.

■ Bay State insiders report that Joe Kennedy is petitioning to have his 39-year brotherhood with Michael Kennedy annulled.

Reno v. *Freeh*

Janet bobs around a lot;
Louis lands a few.
Neither's looking for a clinch,
While at ringside (Phew!)
Perspiration's dripping from
Bill and Hillary.
No one knows what round it is.
There's no referee.

—W. H. von Dreele

Return to Spender

THE short story about the budget is that President Clinton got 80 per cent of the spending increases he asked for, while congressional Republicans got less than 25 per cent of the tax reduction they promised in the now-forgotten Contract with America. Unlike our contributor Dick Morris (now spinning for both parties) we cannot see this as a victory.

Worse yet, much of the tax reduction goes either to pay for tax credits to send more undereducated high-school graduates to the college of their choice or to finance tax reductions of $500 for families with children. Republican tax cuts—the kind that pay for themselves by increasing incentives to work, save, and invest—must share what remains of the $85-billion total (over five years).

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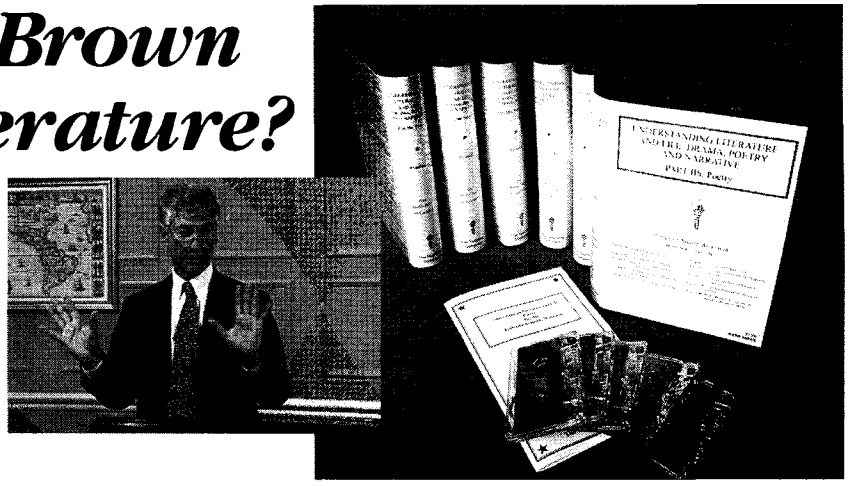
Can't get to Brown to study Literature?



Art seduces. And who is a better cupid for the literary romance than a professor who loves what he does...

Professor Arnold Weinstein, Edna and Richard Salomon Distinguished Professor, recently received the Brown University award as the Best Teacher in the Humanities. His course is part of The Teaching Company's SuperStar Teachers series. This series brings America's premiere college lecture professors, those rated highest by students, to anyone who values the sheer joy of learning. And Professor Weinstein is what we all have in mind when we think of such a teacher.

In his course *Understanding Literature and Life: Drama, Poetry and Narrative*, he shares his passion. By explaining in simple terms the various complex ideas that underlie major canonical texts, he draws us into the romance, serving as a conduit to the riches of a literary life.

To him, art is not for just the few: the rich and learned. It isn't an accessory to life. Art is for everybody, and it is essential.

This course is an introduction to the major texts of Western culture, from antiquity to the present, with special emphasis on the uniqueness of literary language, the formal and generic conventions of literary production, the position that literature occupies as a site for historical and ideological forces and conflicts, and finally the continuing human significance of the great works of the past and the present.

All too often, people feel either locked out of the Great Books, unequipped to savor their richness, or else they feel that great literature has only some antiquarian or museum value. One purpose of this course is to empower readers to make their entry into the works of the past an exciting and gratifying experience that widens one's optic on self and society in unpredictable and enduring ways.

This course is designed to exhibit not only the themes and techniques of great literature, but also to expose the power and limitations of different analytic tools—feminism, Marxism, Freudianism, deconstruction, "close reading" and others—in assisting our understanding of these monuments of the human spirit.

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The big reduction in entitlement spending turns out to be no such thing. Most of the claimed savings of $115 billion come from tightening price controls on doctors, nursing homes, and hospitals. Better enlarge the anti-fraud squad and start worrying about the quality of health care. Will doctors and hospitals give the same service for lower fees? Would you?

The big spending reductions come from the parts of the

Right Data

Al Gore calls it "historic," and Trent Lott says it's "revolutionary." But "fantasy" might be the best word to describe the budget agreement. We examine three major assertions.

Claim: "A $220-billion revenue windfall makes it possible."

Right Data: This rests on a highly implausible assumption: that economic growth will continue at or near the first quarter's breakneck rate, 5.6 per cent.

Tax payments in April were $25 billion above the Congressional Budget Office's March forecast, while withholdings jumped $20 billion. Clearly, the CBO was caught by surprise. Yet Director June O'Neill, in her letter to Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici, avers that ". . . a downward adjustment in the deficit of $45 billion in 1997 and similar amounts for 1998 through 2002 would be reasonable for planning the budget resolution."

Is non-stop growth through 2002 a "reasonable" assumption? Consider this: the current recovery is in its seventh year, and no recovery in history has lasted longer than nine years. The first chart calculates the impact of lower-than-expected economic growth.

Slower growth may not be in the cards. If it is, the deficit problem rapidly becomes a deficit crisis.

Claim: "Spending will be cut $250 billion over five years."

Right Data: Cut from what? In budget-speak, "cuts" are measured from a rapidly growing baseline showing what the government would spend if it were left on automatic pilot. So while the agreement holds spending below the baseline, we estimate total outlays in 2002 will be at least $248 billion, or 15.2 per cent, above this year's level.

Although total spending will fall as a percentage of GDP, this reflects defense cuts and interest savings. Entitlements and non-defense discretionary spending will consume a larger share of GDP in 2002 than they do today.

Claim: "Staves off Medicare insolvency to at least 2007."

Right Data: The agreement calls for $115 billion in Medicare savings over five years, most of it from cutting the growth of fees paid to doctors, hospitals, and HMOs. Every budget deal in recent history has tried such price controls without success. Typically, providers respond to lower fees by increasing the frequency at which they bill the government for services. Or they shift Medicare costs to private insurance companies.

In fact, high fees have never been Medicare's problem. (Average Medicare reimbursements are 25 per cent below the amount paid by private insurers.) Beneficiaries simply have no incentive to economize on medical services. That's the Medicare problem.

Price controls are a stroke of genius compared to the other part of the Medicare fix. Negotiators "saved" the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund (part A) by shifting its most rapidly growing component—home health care—to the Medical Insurance Trust Fund (part B). This is pure smoke and mirrors. Part B premiums will rise to $56.50 in 2002 from $43.80 now. In government accounting, premium increases are counted as spending reductions.

At best, the agreement slows the rise of Medicare's grab of the national economy. Two months ago the Congressional Budget Office estimated that Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security were on course to consume 14 per cent of GDP in 2020, up from 8.7 per cent in 1997. This budget deal does nothing to alter that projection. —Ed Rubenstein

CBO's Deficit Baseline
(Billions)

	March Forecast	May Forecast	May Forecast with 2%/yr. Lower Growth
1996	$107	$107	$107
1997	112	67	84
1998	120	75	133
1999	147	102	210
2000	171	126	288
2001	167	122	343
2002	188	143	429

Federal Spending

	Baseline	Budget Agreement*	Baseline	Budget Agreement*
	(Billions)		*(As % of GDP)*	
1996	$1,560	$1,560	20.8%	20.8%
1997	1,632	1,632	20.8	20.8
1998	1,687	1,687	20.6	20.6
1999	1,781	1,761	20.8	20.5
2000	1,877	1,814	20.9	20.2
2001	1,948	1,844	20.7	19.6
2002	2,049	1,880	20.8	19.0
Change, 1997–2002	+$417 +25.6%	+$248 +15.2%	No Change	–1.8%pts.

* Assumes total spending equal to Administration's Feb. Budget plan.

Medicare Spending

	Baseline	Budget Agreement*	Baseline	Budget Agreement*
	(Billions)		*(As % of GDP)*	
1996	$191	$196	2.6%	2.6%
1997	209	209	2.7	2.7
1998	227	204	2.8	2.5
1999	248	225	2.9	2.6
2000	273	250	3.0	2.8
2001	286	263	3.0	2.8
2002	314	291	3.2	2.9
Increase, 1997–2002	+$105 +50.2%	+$82 +39.2%	+0.6%pts.	+0.3%pts

* Assumes spending cuts are spread evenly over 5 years.

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Federal agents have planted evidence, lied under oath, shot citizens in the head and burned children alive over $200 tax disputes. No agent has spent a single night in jail or been fined even one dollar. Millions of Americans have been wondering:

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--Vin Suprynowicz, Las Vegas Review-Journal.

"What Harriet Beecher Stowe did in 1853 [showing uninformed northerners the horrors of slavery in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*] John Ross has done for today's struggle for individual freedom... Read it!"

--Aaron Zelman, Executive Director, Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership.

"Magnificent... will terrify and appall jackbooted stormtroopers everywhere, and even more so the whimpering media geeks who squat to lick those boots."

--Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph.

"This is the most disturbing book I have ever read. That said, it ranks only below Holy Scripture as required reading... the most frightening novel ever written about a federal bureaucracy spun totally out of control."

--Peter Kokalis, editor of Fighting Firearms.

"Ross has succeeded at writing that rarest of thrillers: a dynamic story with overwhelming national significance which requires no suspension of disbelief...you will not be able to put it down."

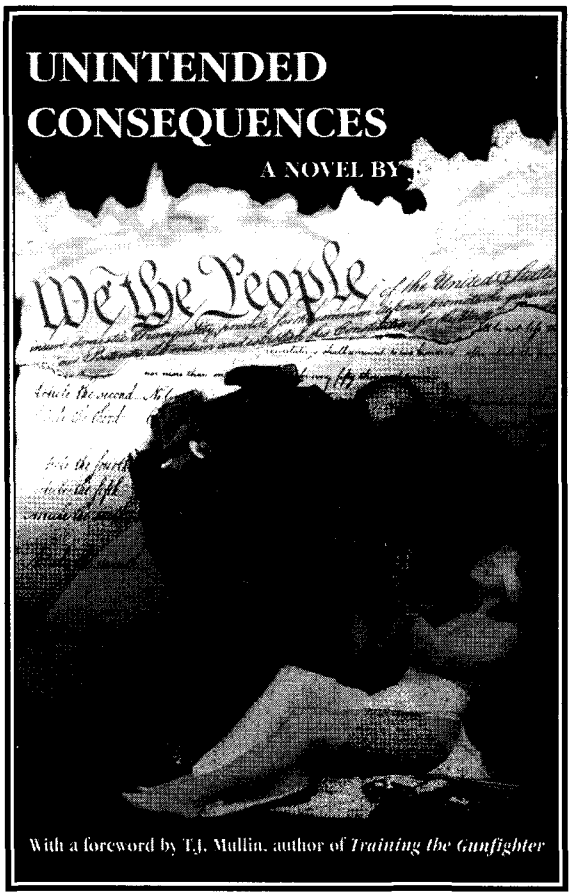
--The Special Forces Resister.

"The most important work of fiction I have ever read."

--Dr. Edgar Suter, National Chair, Doctors for Integrity in Policy Research.

"Describes the scenario I've been worrying about for ten years...that damn Ross wrote my book!"

--Col. James Jeffries III, the former federal prosecutor whose evidence forced Spiro Agnew to resign. Jeffries is now in private practice defending Constitutional issues.



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budget subject to annual appropriation. That includes defense and many of the sorts of transfer and training programs that Democrats love. If experience is any guide, defense spending will be cut permanently. (An army that specializes in peacekeeping doesn't need many weapons.) Some of the domestic transfer and training programs will be cut, too. But these cuts will be mainly reductions in the growth of programs.

We can write the script now. A few cases of hardship will be featured on the nightly news and in other media. After a wave of angst about the suffering of the victims, the cuts will be restored, just as the current budget agreement restores some of the cuts in welfare spending enacted last year. To make up the shortfall, the agreement includes some exaggerated estimates of receipts from selling the radio and TV spectrum and other assets in 2002.

The Week in Verse

From far-off lands we hear unhappy stories
Of earthquakes in *Iran*—or on the *Tories*—
Of greedy *Swiss*, who're hoarding *Nazi* gold,
Or *Russian* missiles shakily controlled,
Or, in Zaïre, how brother slaughters brother,
While starving *North Koreans* eat each other.
But here in *God's Country*, our worries few,
We fuss that *Kasparov* can't beat *Deep Blue*,
Who's got the sack, who's got it in the bag,
Or that some *Texans* fly the Lone Star flag,
Or that the *Clintons'* story stands in rubble
Explaining visits from, cash paid to, *Hubbell*.
What though, defiant still of *Starr's* subpoena,
Unclean already, now they look uncleaner?

Such trifles fade away—at least look pale—
Now *Newt* has brought us back the Holy Grail
And all good things (who cares if *Gramm* complains?):
A *Balanced Budget* cutting *Cap'tal Gains*!
A bitter pill for *Bill*, who's quite distrait
With eighty billion for the NEA,
AmeriCorps, Head Start, some new health care—
Does he not gnash his teeth and tear his hair?
And aren't we happy there'll be no *Shutdown*
The *Dems* can use to drive us out of town?
We've no more fear of monster or of man
Than of a dissident *Republican*.

So all is well; the people's work is done,
And *Harmony's* restored in *Washington*.
Newt's gone ahead—and vanished round the bend—
Where drugs and teenage pregnancy will end,
Crime disappears and kids all learn in school,
And churchgoing is seen as very cool.
Of course the *Debt* is paid (they'll outlaw war),
And all is well in twenty twenty-four.
Though *Burton* growls, Republicans are dumb.
Who's going to spoil this new *Millennium*?

—Juvenal

Now for the bad news: The major budget problem is the long-term growth of spending on Social Security and Medicare. The budget agreement does nothing about Social Security and only puts a patch on Medicare for a few years. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the size of these deficits in 2025 at 10 per cent of GDP, or $2.7 trillion (yes, trillion). And it gets worse after that.

This is the real budget problem. It can be solved in one of only three ways: cut spending on Social Security and Medicare; increase tax rates; or get the economy to grow faster by reducing tax rates and regulation. By far the best option for Social Security is a combination of later retirement in order to reduce spending, and deregulation and tax cuts in order to raise the growth rate. Come to think of it, tax cuts and deregulation were the Republican program in 1994 and 1996. What ever happened to those guys?

Twilight of the Newts

NEWT Gingrich says the budget deal "accomplished everything we set out to do in the Contract with America." Mr. Gingrich is, in a sense, right: if this deal goes through with Republican support, the Contract Era of the party's history will indeed come to a close.

During this period, Republicans have defined themselves by their commitment to a balanced budget. The Republican "revolution" didn't have to be about zero deficits. Small-government conservatives oppose federal programs for other reasons besides expense. Some programs are socially destructive; many could be more efficiently performed by others; most aren't the business of the Federal Government. Ending them would do more to limit government than putting every agency on a diet. Republicans could also have rooted out state-sponsored discrimination, curbed abortion-on-demand, and cut taxes. This political strategy would have targeted Reagan Democrats, not surly Perotistas.

Republicans went down the zero-deficit road for a number of reasons. It unified the party—it was their lowest common denominator. They also craved Beltway respectability, which meant doing the "responsible" thing. Not least, many of them actually believed their arguments about the balefulness of deficits. Most conservatives, gambling that they could use deficit hysteria to shrink government, went along. Balancing the budget, however, proved to be such a politically demanding task that it became a substitute for strategic thinking. In 1995, Republicans pitted voters' abstract approval of balanced budgets against their concrete interests, such as Medicare coverage. That decision resulted in a debacle from which Republicans have not yet recovered.

Conservatives' acquiescence to deficit-phobia led to the revival of a GOP they thought they had buried: the old Nixon–Ford–Bush–Dole party. Even conservative Re-

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publicans are back in their pre-Reagan paralysis. The legislative story of 1996 was one of superficially attractive but destructive ideas—a boost in the minimum wage, more health-insurance regulation—filling a vacuum. "We're still worshipping at the shrine of the balanced budget," complains Rep. Peter King (R., N.Y.).

We have now reached the logical endpoint of this idolatry: a "balanced budget" that does nothing to shrink government. President Clinton boasts that it includes the biggest increase in social spending in thirty years, and he's right. In a supposedly conservative era, President Clinton will have managed to increase spending throughout his tenure. Republicans are calling these spending increases "cuts" because they could have spent more, which is precisely the kind of phony accounting their 1996 platform denounced the Democrats for doing. The deal doesn't even balance the budget. A whopping 96 per cent of the deficit reduction is based, not on policy changes, but on reckless economic assumptions. The economy is assumed to set records for growth for the next few years; it is assumed that interest payments will be reduced. If wishes were horses, Republicans might ride. No wonder the congressional leadership wants to rush through a budget resolution. Anyone who looked at these numbers carefully would balk.

Republicans want most of all to lead quiet lives until the next election. If the deal goes through, they will turn to safe issues like crime and drugs, where they can neither do much good nor get political traction. Meanwhile, they will have ratified the moderate credentials of every congressional Democrat who votes for this balanced budget. In effect, Republicans will have created Clinton clones all over the Hill—including themselves. We are all New Democrats now.

Rent, the Non-Musical

RENT controls in New York City were established as an emergency measure during World War II. The war ended in 1945, but rent controls marched on—until last December, when Joseph L. Bruno, a Republican legislator from upstate New York, began pushing to end them. Since then it has been D-Day.

New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani went to bat for controls ("this is a very expensive city"). Gov. George Pataki offered a compromise, lifting controls on 1 per cent of the affected apartments. John Cardinal O'Connor told the city and the world that "dignified housing" is a "basic human right." In the *New York Observer*, *NR*'s Richard Brookhiser quoted a pro-control poster that went up in his building, which hamhandedly alluded to Pastor Martin Niemoeller's warning against the Nazis. "Remember they came for the blue-eyed people, but because I was not blue-eyed I did nothing. Then they came for the brown-haired people, but because I was not brown-haired I did nothing . . ." Brookhiser commented: "Even in New York, it would probably seem excessive to say flat-out that landlords are Nazis. It is not excessive to do the next best (or worst) thing, which is to say subliminally that they are Nazis."

Rent control is to a great extent a middle-class benefit. Census figures show that one-fifth of the tenants who enjoy it earn more than $50,000 a year, and that is surely an understatement, since concealing income is endemic. Rent control is distributed on a purely arbitrary basis: those who have lived in the city a long time (or through luck or bribery secured a regulated apartment) benefit, while newcomers chase the shrunken number of unregulated apartments, at inflated prices.

It is also a violation of the right of ownership, which may not be a basic human right in today's New York but was for other Americans, e.g., the Founders. Gov. Pataki opined that "every middle-class tenant has the right to remain in their [*sic*] apartment for the rest of their lives if they choose." They already have that right. It's called buying.

Power Failure

EVEN as electricity competition is causing a buzz in Washington, D.C. (see "Capital Scene," p. 27), there is a short circuit in New York State.

There the Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) labors under a $5-billion debt from its failed Shoreham nuclear-power plant, and charges its customers 17 cents per kilowatt hour—the highest rate in the nation—as part of a recovery effort guaranteed by former governor Mario Cuomo. Now his successor, George Pataki, wants to institute another Cuomo policy he opposed when he was running against Cuomo in 1994. Pataki wants a public power authority to take over the utility and issue $7.3 billion in municipal bonds—which would be the largest offering in history—to bail out LILCO shareholders. There would be little relief for Long Islanders, who

On to Brussels

As slogans go, it doesn't sing:
It has a certain bourgeois ring.
It would have bombed at Agincourt,
But Tony Blair is not the sort
To have contested Gallic swords;
He longs to dump the House of Lords.
So toast the Queen and down a gin.
Calais is where the wogs begin.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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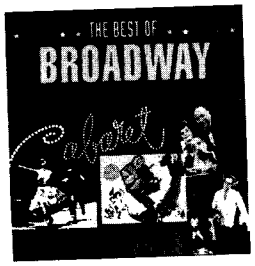

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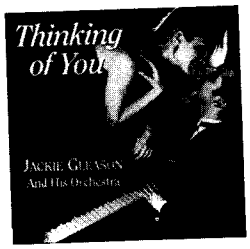

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Supreme Court–Bound

What Nixon subsequently learned
About the tapes he should have burned,
The Mrs. has discovered, too,
As, like a rude hobgoblin's "Boo!"
On Hallowe'en, notes she assumed
Had been embalmed and then entombed,
Shake, rattle, roll, and otherwise
Quite murder sleep with muffled cries.

—W. H. VON DREELE

would still be buying 90 per cent of their power from LILCO in the year 2005.

Mr. Cuomo's decision to amortize the LILCO debt was imprudent; Mr. Pataki's bond issue violates the state constitution as well, by incurring long-term debt without voter approval. That, of course, has never stopped New York pols and their bond-trading friends.

The governor would do better to break out of the mentality of scarcity and shame LILCO shareholders into realizing that the new global market offers them an opportunity to recover their losses, not by relying on a monopoly, but by fighting to sell power to Californians and Canadians, just as businessmen do every day. Mr. Pataki is mentioned (albeit mainly in Albany papers) as a possible GOP presidential nominee. He won't make it as a reheated Mario Cuomo.

Medium Stick

FOR DECADES, the U.S. opposed the Arab League's secondary and tertiary boycott of Israel, considering it an unwarranted interference in other countries' freedom to trade. Recently, we have used the same tools—with mixed results. The 1996 Helms–Burton Act attempts to punish foreign companies that trade with Cuba, especially those investing in property confiscated by the Communist regime. The intent was honorable, but the result has been a monumental brawl with our most important trading partners, the European Union and Canada, which also threatens to wreck the new World Trade Organization, set up to enforce liberalized trade globally. The costs seem too great, especially since Cuba is no longer a strategic threat. Fortunately, a last-minute compromise in April put off a U.S.–EU clash in the WTO for at least another six months.

Iran is a different case. The strategic menace of Iran is clear. Evidence increasingly points to Iranian involvement in the June 1996 terrorist bombing that killed 19 American servicemen in Saudi Arabia, as well as in the constant terrorism against Israel by Islamic extremists in Gaza and Lebanon. Most dramatic was the April 10 ruling by a German court that the highest levels of the Iranian government were implicated in the 1992 murders of four Iranian Kurdish exile leaders in a restaurant in Berlin. Isolating and weakening Iran makes sense. U.S. law now denies access to the U.S. market to foreign companies doing business with Iran. There has been grumbling about this too, abroad and at home: a spectacularly ill-timed report by a Council on Foreign Relations task force headed by Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft calls for a more "nuanced" U.S. approach to the mullahs. For now, however, it seems likely that the Europeans will move toward our present policy, instead of the reverse. The German court's decision has prompted massive anti-German demonstrations in Iran and a decision by most EU members to cut back their political and economic dealings with Teheran. This is vindication for containment of a serious threat.

Play Ball

THE literary critic Leslie Fiedler once complained that there were so many intellectuals at the ball parks that one couldn't see the game because of the sunlight glaring off the glasses behind third base. Why does baseball attract literary types?

Baseball accumulates meaning in a way that other sports do not because it is so conservative. If Ty Cobb or Grover Cleveland Alexander dropped in on a major-league game today, he would instantly recognize it as the same game he played early in this century. There are the same nine players arranged around a green diamond. The players still chew tobacco, and insults stream from rival dugouts. Because baseball never changes essentially, its records matter. Ted Williams's .406 is still there and startling, as is Joe DiMaggio's 1941 streak.

By comparison, football has changed radically. Once it was played with flying wedges, no helmets, and no forward pass. Substitution was rare, and everyone played both offense and defense. Then came the T-formation and free substitution and huge helmets that are also weapons. Tennis has been similarly transformed. The graphite racket has led to 120-mph serves, short-point slugfests, and a generally cruder, un-nuanced game. If baseball introduced graphite bats, Ken Griffey Jr. would hit 60 home runs before the Fourth of July.

No one wants to speed up baseball. A game can take hours. The pace is rural, rooted in lazy afternoons on cow-pasture diamonds. It does not go by the clock, any more than a farmer goes by the clock.

The historian Bruce Catton once wrote that "baseball has even more legends than the Civil War," and he ought to know. And, come to think of it, the Civil War is distinctively "America's national war," different from all the others. As ever, as always, "Play ball."

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Remembering Murray Kempton

—— Wm. F. Buckley Jr. ——

A SINGLE death routinely overwhelms the household, while at the other end of the scale the whole world is seemingly overwhelmed as when, one year after the turn of the century, Victoria caused the Victorian age to die along with her. In between are the deaths of local, regional, and national divinities. San Francisco stood still the day Herb Caen died, and then Chicago spent the day mourning Mike Royko. In New York, on May 5, Murray Kempton died. That was of extra-parochial concern. The *New York Times* observed his death on its front page with a photograph of the recognizable figure with his indispensable pipe. Inside, it gave its readers a brilliant and moving page-length obituary, by Richard Severo ("Murray Kempton never sought a job at the *Times*. For him, the *Times* took itself too seriously"). *Newsday*, the daily for which Kempton had written until he fell ill, devoted the whole of the cover to his photograph ("Murray Kempton, 1917–1997. A HALF-CENTURY OF ELEGANCE AND TRUTH") and ran five stories. The *Daily News*'s Jim Dwyer remarked the death of "the greatest newspaperman of the twentieth century," and the *Post*, with which Kempton was for so many years associated, ran several features.

Murray Kempton was 79 and had been ailing. In January, pancreatic cancer was diagnosed. After surgery he spent weeks in a hospital in Princeton, going then to a nursing home on the West Side for continuing treatment under the auspices of Sloan Kettering. There, very early Monday morning, his heart stopped beating.

MY own reaction, on hearing the news, was the spastic maybe-it's-for-the-best. I had a friend who took two bad years to yield, finally, to that merciless affliction. Ten days ago, lying, white-haired and emaciated with a tube or two in his arm, Murray had said, "Do you *know* what my medical expenses have been? —*me*, without any claim to any value in the free market? *Three hundred thousand dollars!*" I whistled, and shared with Murray's son David noisy and indignant astonishment at so gross a figure for 11 weeks' health care. Without exactly delving into the question of resources, the conversation proceeded on the assumption (generally safe, though not always) that somebody, somewhere, would handle the cost of his illness, however long it lasted. Whatever the clinical prospects, there was no impulse in that little room by the Hudson River on 87th Street to pack it all in. In 1995 his wife Beverly, after a long ordeal, had died. He wrote me, "I'm sure you have no end of those dear friends, Job's counselors, who describe the worst things as for the best as if to congratulate you for release from inconveniences. The day before she died one such reminded me that it might be better so and I was grateful for the impulse that welled up and impelled me to reply that my views are the Pope's and we both prefer life to death."

He spoke now, his voice weak but resolute, of activity he would undertake in the weeks, indeed years, ahead. "I don't think it's absolutely decided that I won't be able to work." He had given me to look at, in December, the opening chapter from a proposed autobiography. "I think I can get it done in eight or nine months." In the chapter I read, he dealt with his combat experience in the Pacific and ended, as only Kempton and St. Sebastian could have done, with an expression of pity and compassion for the Japanese soldiers who hours before had tried to kill—and had very nearly succeeded in doing so—Private Kempton and his squad. Suddenly, on that tumultuous, hot, humid, topsy-turvy afternoon, Murray's unit discovered that they actually outnumbered the Japanese.

"*There could not have been more than six of them and there were never fewer than twenty of us; and our advantage in metallic weight was far crueler than in numbers. I myself carried more killing power on my shoulder than all of them could summon up with their .25-caliber single-shot carbines.*"

Was that, then, the end of the enemy? Crushed by the U.S. military? Certainly that alternative, in a hot, sticky, pitiless war, suggested itself. "*It would be by no means unreasonable to inquire as to why, instead of withdrawing in order, we did not respond as patrols are expected to and simply turn our weapons on these overmatched enemies and transform their ambush into their terminal disaster. I have once or twice asked myself the same question. Respect for your betters perhaps; and in any case rather more than just, as well. They had come at us as the stuff of what must have been the last clear Japanese victory in the Pacific, and they deserved the satisfactions of a pride that had outlasted what may or may not once have been their arrogance.*"

It sounded unreal. Spare the enemy, or else run the risk of an affront to their pride! But it sounded, also,

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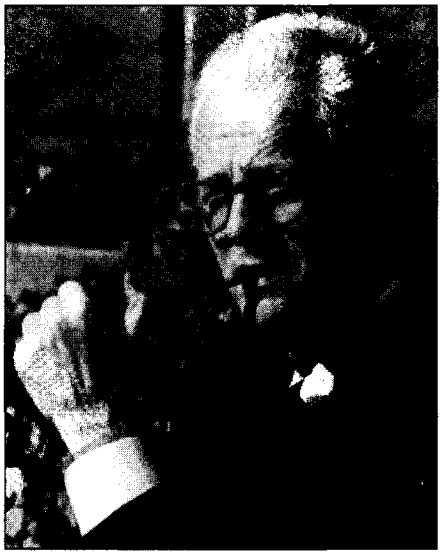
very much like Murray Kempton; who in his career lacerated us all, but scorned only the hypocrites and the arrogant. In March 1945, on the island of Aglao in the South Pacific, he had no personal evidence that the six Japanese whose ambush had failed really deserved to be shot.

IN 1989, *Newsday*'s publisher decided to celebrate the paper's three Pulitzer Prize–winners by turning the stage of the 92nd Street Y over to each of them on successive nights for an evening of public banter with any one journalist of their choice. Kempton tapped me.

My job was to introduce the prize-winner commodiously ("10 to 15 minutes. After that, you cross-interrogate"). I gave considerable thought to the assignment. The audiences at the Y are sophisticated. And in any case nothing would have vexed Murray more than ten minutes of serial idolatry.

I told the audience that in 1961, 28 years earlier, I had been asked to do a profile of Murray Kempton, already the toast of New York's Left-literati, the most learned, most amusing, most provocative journalist in town. I told the editor (of *Monocle*) that the assignment was too burdensome. Kempton wrote four columns every week and had been doing so for ten years. There was no way I could do a comprehensive analysis of his writing and his views. What I agreed to undertake was an essay based on the four individual columns by Kempton published the week before I wrote.



My stunt (which worked) would demonstrate to the audience at the Y that, after nearly thirty years, Murray Kempton hadn't changed. He never did change. In what ways was he unchanged?

I HAD begun my article by saying (The First Law) that Murray really did not understand elementary economic laws.

"What would happen, one wonders, if the Devil should take the scales from Kempton's eyes, and let him see into the world of economics? I say the Devil, because the Lord would not do so fiendish a thing. What a terrible end! Murray's muse would dry up, and the pagan love song to humankind which he has been trilling for so many years would get all hung up, under the discipline of keys, and measures, and clefs. Kempton does not realize that theory is as liberating in social science as dogma is in theology. Yet Kempton is as necessary to humane industrial organization as Sam Goldwyn to idiomatic English. But even as linguistic solecisms remain solecisms, so is it with economic solecisms."

Later in the evening Murray would not deny his formal ignorance of the dismal science. He took, instead, wry satisfaction from it.

My second finding about Murray Kempton, 1961, was that he was obstinately compassionate. I quoted the week's column on the defeat of Carmine De Sapio, the last Tammany baron of Manhattan.

One of the most satisfying things about Kempton (I said) is his impartial iconoclasm. I remember his writing when Roy Cohn was finally and ignominiously forced out of Senator McCarthy's committee, "*So help me God, I feel sorry for Roy Cohn*"—which I am sure he did, as well he might have, having for months galloped miles ahead of the posse (never did so many supererogate upon so little!). It is as distasteful to use a machine gun to deliver the coup de grâce as it is to wait for a fourth coda finally to terminate a Tchaikovsky symphony. In 1960 Kempton did not want to go to the Republican Convention in Chicago. "If I do," he told me, "I'll knock Nixon—it's like junk. But I *like* Nixon!" He feels sorry for mangled corpses; but it is also for artistic reasons that he feels the need to back away.

Today (I called up his column of Wednesday) he goes after Tammany-killer Mayor Robert Wagner, again. Kempton, of course, saw through the phoniness of the anti–De Sapio frenzy of the summer and fall of 1960, of which Ed Koch was the beneficiary. Kempton passed the day of the execution in the company of the falling leader De Sapio, trailing him wherever he went, closely observing his manners, and reacting prodigally to his remarkable personal gentility. "*I sometimes think*," he wrote, "*that if Carmine De Sapio were running against Lucifer he would consider it ungentlemanly to mention that little trouble in heaven.*"

When it was finally evident that De Sapio had been overthrown, there were still the conventional and poignant rituals to go through. After his concession speech De Sapio walked out alone from his office after midnight, into the streets. "*His visitor*' [Kempton's unobtrusive way of designating himself in his interviews] *left him and walked into the streets and noticed that there were no slums any more, and no landlords, and the Age of Pericles had begun because we were rid of Carmine De Sapio. One had to walk carefully to avoid being stabbed by the lilies bursting in the pavements. I wish the reformers luck—with less Christian sincerity than Carmine De Sapio does. I will be a long time forgiving them this one.*"

MY next law was to the effect that nobody in the entire world had a shrewder eye than Kempton for engaging political trivia, or had—or gave—greater fun in recording them.

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Why had Senator John F. Kennedy defeated Vice President Richard Nixon in November? In Thursday's column, Murray Kempton came up with the explanation. He had been examining Public Document 75459 from the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, labeled, "The Joint Appearances of Senator John F. Kennedy and Vice President Richard M. Nixon and Other 1960 Campaign Presentations." Kempton had focused on an exchange on NBC's *Tonight Show* with Jack Paar.

VICE PRESIDENT NIXON: Could I ask you one favor, Jack?
JACK PAAR: Yes sir; you can ask any favor you'd like.
VICE PRESIDENT NIXON: Could we have your autograph for our girls?

"*That was September 11, 1960*," Kempton noted, "*and Nixon had packed* [*for the White House*]. *But the Kennedys rallied two weeks later*."

CHARLES COLLINGWOOD [of CBS, addressing JFK's 4-year-old]: Hello, Caroline.
CAROLINE: Hello.
MRS. KENNEDY: Can you say hello?
CAROLINE: Hello.
MRS. KENNEDY: Here, do you want to sit up in bed with me?
MR. COLLINGWOOD: Oh, isn't she a darling?
MRS. KENNEDY: Now, look at the three bears.
MR. COLLINGWOOD: What is the dolly's name?
MRS. KENNEDY: All right, what is the dolly's name?
CAROLINE: I didn't name her yet.

Kempton went on: "*But the mystery of* [*Nixon's*] *collapse taunts us yet. Still, it was a terribly close election and who can say what small mistake cost him it? There is this one clue*:

BILL HENRY OF NBC: I am so fascinated with that little kitten. Does the kitten have a name?
JULIE NIXON: Yes, its name is Bitsy Blue Eyes.

"*Maybe*," Kempton concluded his column, "*Caroline saved the package when she held off naming the doll*."

THE next day's column was about the Dominican Republic's famous playboy politico. Kempton noted that Porfirio Rubirosa, sometime son-in-law of General Trujillo, had been fired from his diplomatic post after 24 years of—as he put it—"*carrying his diplomatic passport into some of the most distinguished boudoirs in the architecture of international relations.*"

What happened was that a U.S. grand jury, looking into the mysterious death in Florida of a Dominican opponent of the dictator, had written out a subpoena for son-in-law Rubirosa. But Rubirosa, safely abroad, declined to appear. The evidence against him was, as Kempton put it, "*admittedly wispy and arose from the unfortunate coincidence that any member of the Dominican Republic's tiny middle class is apt to be related either to a victim or to an assassin or to both.*" My Third Law: All sociologists could learn from Kempton how in one sentence to capture an entire culture.

I then devoted a minute or two to Murray Kempton as Chronicler of the American Right.

He was fascinated by the Right, especially the hard Right. "I have discovered the definition of a radical," he told me once over the telephone. "It is anyone whose name is preceded by 'so-called.' " Kempton had had difficulty, a few days before, persuading any taxi driver at the airport in Montgomery, Alabama, to take him to the home of Martin Luther King. He solved the problem by asking a driver to take him to the home of "the so-called Martin Luther King."

Kempton (I continued) is the principal chronicler of hard-Right activities, and makes his way about the Right labyrinth with ease. He has no trouble at all mixing easily with those whom the next morning he will berate with a passionate wit. As a matter of fact, Kempton has *no* enemies, and that is an unusual estate for a man with so active a tongue. "Everybody likes me," he told me mournfully at the political convention in Chicago. "That is one of my major failings. For instance, take my book *America Comes of Middle Age*—it got *only* favorable reviews!"

'His visitor left him and walked into the streets and noticed that there were no slums any more, and no landlords, and the Age of Pericles had begun because we were rid of Carmine De Sapio.'

"*Sharonology*," he wrote, "*is the study of the internal struggles of the American Right, as Kremlinology is the study of the internal struggles of the Politburo, the materials in both cases being incomprehensible documents and speakers' lists at dinners. It takes its name from Sharon, Connecticut, birthplace of*" . . . your visitor. "[*Conservative columnist George*] *Sokolsky has taken after Dr. Fred Schwarz, director of the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade. Schwarz is an Australian, and Sokolsky feels that anti-Communism is an American enterprise; he is high tariff in all things. Conservative radio commentator Fulton Lewis Jr. has become a security risk in some quarters of the hard Right because as an honored speaker at the* Human Events *Forum in Washington the other day . . . he abused the privileges of the rostrum to attack certain unidentified flying objects who confuse the issue by thinking that everybody is a Communist.*"

Straining, finally, for a 100-proof dollop of Hate Kempton applejack I concluded my essay by examining his fourth column of the week.

Here Kempton is at his absolute, unbeatable worst. It has been said there is no theological question Billy Gra-

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ham cannot vulgarize; so there is no issue touching the Communist problem that Murray Kempton cannot sentimentalize. The Communist enterprise, or at least that part of it that goes on in this country, is in his opinion *opéra bouffe*. I have never seen a pointed sentence by Murray Kempton on the subject of the Communist problem at home: always the systematic refusal to face the systematically demanding question Sidney Hook faced up to in his book *Heresy Yes, Conspiracy No*. "The trouble with Kempton," Hook once said, "is he thinks with his stomach." (The trouble with Hook, I ventured, is he doesn't think often enough with his stomach.)

But Hook was right here. I give you the *locus classicus*, Kempton's report on the election of the new president of the Communist Party of the United States of America. "*It is impossible to look at Miss* [*Elizabeth Gurley*] *Flynn* [*the CPUSA president-elect*] *without collapsing into the molasses of the American dream. She is the aunt Dorothy longed to get back to from Oz. If the old-fashioned virtues really had any impact on our culture, the disenchanted of our society would rush to this dear sister's bosom.* [*She has*] *a face that would be irresistible on the label of an apple-pie mix.*" Had enough? (I asked rhetorically). Well, I don't care. You will have more. "*You could sum up the domestic history of a dozen years just by printing a picture of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and putting under it the caption, 'From 1948 to 196– a great nation was afraid of this woman!' But what generation unborn could possibly be expected to believe that*?"

I ended my essay/introduction heavily. "There are other problems more likely to urge themselves on generations unborn. The incumbent young generation in Cuba will wonder less why some Cubans were afraid of Fidel Castro, than why other Cubans were not.

"E. Flynn's face is, after all, no more pleasing than poor Kerensky's. One has the feeling that the poet Kempton is resigned to turning over the future to the prosaic men who are poetically benighted; just so long as he can be around to write the requiem for our time. A fine requiem it would be. And your visitor, to the extent he is ever tempted where such solemn issues are involved, would care greatly to read that requiem, for it would be grand. But it would be easier reading if one knew that unborn generations would wake free, into free countries, unbewitched by such as Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, who once worked for Lavrentia Beria, who was less than apple-pie mix."

WELL then, that was stirring stuff in 1961, and even as late as 1989—Murray and I, at the Y, performed before the Berlin Wall came down. But one hour after my long introduction Murray, after wandering from subject to allied subject, to not-quite-allied subject, from aphorism to jollity to reminiscence to questions self-directed, to reflections on the Byzantine experience, had the audience eating out of his hand; as also his interrogator.

ON my 70th birthday he sent me the complete sonatas of Scarlatti, performed by Scott Morris. And a letter that began, "I pray your forgiveness for having waked one morning a while back to the revelation of how much I missed you. There's little enough to say beyond that foolishness, and nothing of wisdom except to report that the years between 78 and 80 are quite shockingly depleting and to warn you to brace yourself for their leakage with an early commitment to the disciplines of Geritol."

The discipline Murray Kempton embraced was the Christian faith, as embodied in the Episcopal Church. "My church," he went on, "was inspired by a languid but dutiful zeal to serve the royal will with a bill of divorce. The Book of Common Prayer—the envy even of you Romans, who deserve to be envied for everything else—was established as the foundation of this shadowed faith; and every line and comma was passed through the gimlet eye of Elizabeth I. For centuries thereafter congregants ingested mighty cadences, sweet solaces, and the necessary adjurations to pull up their socks."

He reiterated that he was weary, but that he hoped to stay clear of unheavenly inducements. "I cry your mercy for divagating, but when people haven't talked for so long, degrees of loss of touch do assert themselves. I do, as I first said, very much miss you but"—Murray's witty cheer surfaced, as it always did, "I am otherwise content with having grown too old for further steps on the road to Avernus*, which, as Virgil soundly observed, is a slope so easy that the Germans had but to begin it by underpaying Bach to travel straight down to the Holocaust."

He was a great artist, and a great friend. □

My Funeral

I should like my burial service to take place at the Church of St. Ignatius of Antioch and to follow as closely as its rector deems fit the Order of the Burial of the Dead prescribed by the 1559 Book of Common Prayer, which can be found in my bookcase. It is my preference that there be no reference to my name except in its proper place after "for that it hath pleased thee to deliver this N . . ." If there is to be music I should like it to be the Sanctus *and the* Agnus Dei *from the Byrd Three-Part Mass and the Purcell Funerary Verses, which will, to be sure, have been spoken elsewhere but deserve two hearings if anything in the language does.*

And it would be a pleasant and heartfelt gesture to the low church of my boyhood if the congregants sang "Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand."

—James Murray Kempton
November 20, 1989

* Rendered in Dryden's Virgil as:

Smooth the descent and easy the way
(The Gates of Hell stand open night and day);
But to return and view the cheerful skies,
In this the task and mighty labour lies.

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CAPITAL SCENE

Balanced-Budget Bliss

DICK MORRIS

Dennis Dittrich

WASHINGTON, D.C.

VICTORY. After four decades of Republican agitation, the budget will finally be balanced. When deficits were small, Republicans fought to end the trickle of red ink. When we needed deficits to stimulate our economy, Republicans mistakenly worshiped at the balanced-budget altar. When Republican tax cuts and defense-spending increases drove the deficit higher, hypocrisy did not deter them from mouthing continued piety to the cause of ending deficits. Finally, when it became evident that only through deficit reduction could our economy survive, the GOP sacrificed its President to pursue the holy grail. After a brief fling with irresponsibility in opposing the 1993 deficit-reduction plan awarded them control of Congress in 1994, the Republican Party once again led the charge to balance the budget.

And now the deed is done. With a tax reduction, too! Achieved not by the hellfire of shutdowns or overrides, but through quiet, patient, reasonable negotiation. Like Japan seeking domination of Asia, the Republican Party learned that what it could not achieve by war, it could win through reason in peace.

Politically, this act of bi-partisanship has ended the probationary period of Republican control of Congress and of Democratic control of the White House. Awarded custody of their respective branches after decades of stewardship by the opposite party, the new masters found voters skeptical and unsure about whether the switch would work. While each was ratified in its control in 1996, it was only dread of what Democrats would do in Congress or what Dole would do as President that animated their re-elections.

Now, voters have seen the wisdom of their ways in thus dividing control of the government. In 1997, the American electorate has come to the opposite conclusion it reached in 1982. Fifteen years ago, faced with generally acceptable Republican budget cuts, voters saw how important it was to rely on a Democratic Speaker to stand against Social Security reductions that went too far. Now, while supporting Republican goals of government downsizing, voters see how crucial a Democratic President can be to stop Medicare, Medicaid, education, and environmental cuts that go too far.

Ultimately, this deal marks a power shift within each of the two parties. For Democrats, power has moved from the congressional wing—Gephardt and Bonior—to the presidential wing—Clinton and Gore. For the Republicans, the flow has been to the congressional wing—Lott, Kasich, Domenici, and even Gingrich—and away from the presidential pretenders like Gramm and Thompson.

But beyond the specifics of the budget deal lies a more basic consensus among the parties. The Democratic view that government should spend tax money advancing social ends and the Republican opinion that government should leave tax money in the hands of those who earned it have been melded into a new combination: Government should advance social ends like good parenting and higher schooling by leaving money in the hands of those who earned it *and* who will carry out the social mission we seek to advance. Republicans can reduce government and Democrats can achieve social progress by using tax cuts instead of extra spending to guide private conduct.

Some in the GOP argue that entitlements have not been curbed. But it is not the goal of the American people to curb entitlements. It is their goal to *secure* entitlements by reducing their scope and generosity to a point where we can afford them for future generations. For this worthy task, the budget deal truly opens the door. By securing an administrative adjustment in the Consumer Price Index, the deal constitutes bi-partisan recognition that the index is, indeed flawed. It would have been a serious mistake to correct the index fully in the context of budget balancing. Voters would have seen this honest and reasonable correction as a back-door gimmick to cut their benefits. The responsible use of a minor correction in this deal increases the long-term chance for the survival of Social Security through further adjustment.

The real answer to entitlement reform is, of course, a bi-partisan commission which recommends postponements in the retirement date for future retirees, private investment of Social Security funds, and a full correction of the CPI. There is only one way voters will tolerate a correction in the price index: as the price of saving Social Security for future generations.

Voters have seen the wisdom of their ways in dividing control of the government.

Obviously, the cut in the capital-gains tax is a big win for the GOP. When I worked for President Clinton, I received a phone call from Treasury Undersecretary David Summers in which he told me that he believed a cut in the capital-gains tax rate, with no indexing for the future or retroactive tax cuts for the

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past, was revenue neutral. Armed with this insight, I fought hard for presidential support for this initiative. I was appalled by liberals like Labor Secretary Robert Reich arguing against such a rate cut. "What is the point," I asked, "of a tax that produces no revenue?" But, few in the Administration had the appetite for a posture of welfare cuts for the poor and tax cuts for the rich.

But even the "concessions" to the Democrats are ultimately in the interest of most Republicans. The education tax credit and tax deductions will largely aid the middle class and will enhance individuals' upward mobility, presumably a prerequisite for sharing Republican animosity toward the tax code. The urban jobs program will allow a million welfare recipients to move to jobs. The repeal of immigrant benefit cuts lets Republican Governors like Wilson, Pataki, Whitman, and Bush off the hook while still sending the message to future immigrants that the well of benefits is dry.

Finally, this budget deal sets up an historic legacy for this President and this Congress: no deficit, a tax cut, free education for the first two years of college, and a likely cut in the welfare rolls of 40 to 50 per cent (it's down by over 20 per cent already). Add these to the rest of the record—a reversal in global protectionism, a huge and continuing cut in crime, and, probably, eight years of economic expansion—and they may jointly apply for a place in history heaven. The only defect: they will have to stare at each other's reference in the history books for an eternity. □

Balanced-Budget Blues

KATE O'BEIRNE

Dennis Dittrich

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHEN President Clinton announced that the budget deal had "the largest increase in education funding in thirty years" and included an expansion of government health benefits that represented "a major breakthrough in our efforts to move toward coverage for all Americans," I consoled myself by recalling his reputation for truthfulness. Unfortunately, this time the President was being scrupulously honest about the Republican concessions he had won in the budget agreement.

The truth is that a strong economy has Washington awash in revenues that permit government to grow on its "glide path to a zero deficit"; and so Republicans have broken faith with their commitment to shrink the federal behemoth.

Under the budget agreement, nondefense discretionary spending (the "controllable" part of the federal budget), will grow over the next five years by $193 billion more than Republicans proposed in their budget last year, and by $79 billion more than the President proposed when running for re-election. *This* is a "compromise"? Phil Gramm, the only Republican behaving like he still believes in smaller government, points out that congress will have to raise the spending cap imposed four years ago by Tom Foley, George Mitchell, and Bill Clinton in order to pass the increases. Furthermore, while this increased spending is large enough to accommodate all the President's boondoggles—like federal tutors for 8-year-olds and Internet access for every 12-year-old—Republicans failed to win agreement to cut a single domestic spending program: not the National Endowment for the Arts, or the Legal Services Corporation, or the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Clinton won firm commitments for his spending priorities while Republicans pledge to fight for reductions in the spendthrift appropriations process.

There are also big increases on entitlements. Republicans have helped the President keep his promise to angry liberals, by restoring welfare benefits eliminated in last year's reform. The agreement provides $10 billion over the next five years in cash and medical benefits for non-citizens, and an additional $5 billion in food stamps and welfare-to-work programs. Although AFDC rolls have dropped by 17 per cent in the past two years, total aggregate federal and state welfare spending will grow from $410 billion this year to $530 billion by 2002. Conservatives don't expect Republicans to eliminate the welfare state in a few congressional sessions, but do expect that a Republican Congress will not permit welfare spending to increase faster than inflation.

Entitlement spending is further increased in order to fund another liberal priority—a "Kidcare" program. Over the next five years, $17 billion will be spent to provide care for up to 5 million "uninsured" children. Although the number of children who lack health insurance is far smaller than advocates claim, and has remained constant over the past ten years, this manufactured crisis is being used to justify an expansion of government-run health care, gaining Clinton Care by increments.

The entitlement "savings" in the agreement are in the Medicare program. To Republicans' enormous relief, the President has agreed to reduce Medicare spending by $115 billion, thereby providing cover from the AFL–CIO's incoming fire. The "savings" are achieved by shifting some services from one account to another (an "illusion of extending Medicare's solvency," according to Republicans just a few short weeks ago) and by imposing price controls on doctors and hospitals. Republicans argue that these Medicare reforms will contribute to balancing the budget.

A veteran of past budget wars disagrees. The Hudson Institute's Michael Horowitz was a senior official at the Office of Management and Budget during the 1980s. He explains that phantom Medicare savings have been used time and again to mask increases in discretionary spending. Not surprisingly, doctors and hospitals wind up being smarter than bureaucrats and quickly

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learn how to evade controls. If squeezing providers does cause problems in reduced quality or availability of services, politicians respond to elderly constituents by lifting the controls. "If I had to pick the single most important device for limited government and reduced spending, I'd pick 'no Medicare savings,'" Horowitz says.

Non-defense discretionary spending will grow by $79 billion more than the President proposed when running for re-election.

Why have congressional Republicans signed on to this expansion of government? A combination of battle fatigue and fear of accusations of inaction. A senior House aide explains that Senate Republicans would have won from House Republicans many of the concessions granted Clinton. They expected the Senate to raise discretionary spending above levels agreed to in the House, to pass some version of Kidcare, and to restore some benefits to non-citizens. By signing onto the deal, they believe they have avoided intra-party warfare with the Senate GOP, giving themselves a record of accomplishment for next year's elections, and delivered tax relief—a key plank of the Contract with America. "Promises made, promises kept."

But in the case of tax cuts, it seems that Republicans have overpromised. The agreement provides for a net tax cut of $85 billion, but Republican leaders promised Clinton $35 billion of that for his higher-education tax credits. With only $50 billion available (a fraction of Clinton's $265-billion tax increase of four years ago), Republicans have pledged to reduce capital-gains and estate taxes, and provide a $500 child tax credit. In their budget plan two years ago, Republicans provided $135 billion to cover these three tax reductions.

When pressed on how he plans to deliver on the promised tax cuts, Speaker Gingrich told a group of conservatives that he hopes to use "historically accurate" (dynamic) scoring for the capital-gains cut. The $500 credit, which would cost $101 billion over five years, would be phased in.

Having won a commitment for his college tax credits, Clinton assured congressional Democrats that he reserved the right to reject the specifics of a GOP tax cut if he disagrees with its "component parts." Sen. Kennedy and Minority Leader Gephardt are clamoring for tax "distribution tables" which analyze the effect of tax changes on different income groups so that they'll be ready to wage class warfare against "tax cuts for the rich." A senior Senate GOP aide fears that Republican senators "will fold like a $2 suitcase" in the face of such demagoguery.

In exchange for important but modest tax relief (less than 1 per cent of tax revenues over the next five years), Republicans will have ratified the present size and scope of government. Jim Miller, counselor at Citizens for a Sound Economy and Reagan's last OMB director, believes that the budget agreement represents a complete Republican surrender to the status quo. "Republicans are so happy because they think they have secured their re-election. The truth is that in '94 they were Thatcher Republicans, but now they are Major Republicans and will learn that if they fail to lead with principles they will lose support."

Liberal Democrats are being correctly advised that the agreement is just what's needed to help them shake their "tax and spend" reputations. Al From, president of the Democratic Leadership Council, reminds his friends that "fiscal discipline is a threshold credibility issue for Democrats" and if they pass this budget plan, "voters will give us a hearing on our ideas about investing public resources in education, worker training, and health care." Good plan. Pretend to reduce government so that deceived voters will permit you to expand it even further.

For their part, what do Republicans hope to accomplish after they have ratified business as usual in Washington? A GOP leadership aide explains that the Republicans will next tackle education, drug abuse, and crime. Democrats will be ready with expensive, federal "solutions" to each of these problems, and now that the parties have put aside rancorous arguments about the proper role of government, the parties can meet happily on that common ground in Dick Morris's mythical middle. Isn't bipartisanship grand? □

Charge of the Light Brigade

RAMESH PONNURU

WASHINGTON, D.C.

ELECTRICITY deregulation is shaping up to be what telecommunications reform was to the last Congress: an issue that consumes Washington lobbyists and policy wonks while boring everyone else into inattention. The reason for this "interest gap" is the same in both cases: the distribution of billions of dollars depends on the outcome of technical policy disputes.

Despite frequent claims that electricity is a "natural monopoly," the industry had a history of robust competition prior to regulation. Like many Progressive Era economic reforms, electricity regulation was largely a protection racket for established businesses. The rise of independent power producers since the late 1970s, however, has done much to resurrect the possibility of competition. (Their growth was greatly stimulated by federal regulations arising from the "energy crisis." Not all unintended consequences of legislation are bad.)

The industry is changing fast. Gas-engine turbines have made electricity generation much cheaper than in the past. Major users of electricity are cutting deals with utilities, and "aggregators" are pairing users that have different peak hours—think of schools and hotels—to flatten loads. Everyone in the field knows deregulation is coming, whatever his own wishes, and a handful of states have already taken the first steps. (California just passed a bill that takes effect Jan. 1.) The economy stands to benefit, and so does the polity. Regulated utilities tend to be quite cozy with local governments and indifferent to taxes, union featherbedding, and the like. Why shouldn't they be? Their rates of return are guaranteed. They have

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thus been indifferent or hostile to anti-tax initiatives. That could change in a competitive future.

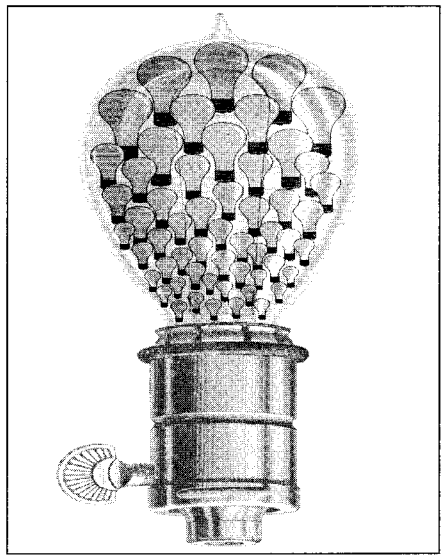
Most utilities want to delay the coming of that future, and to be compensated for transitional costs. They note that they made uneconomical investments—or "stranded costs," in the industry parlance—on the assumption that their regulatory protections would continue. It's hard to guess how a free market that doesn't yet exist would value assets, and so it's unsurprising that estimates of these stranded costs vary greatly—all the way up to several hundred billion dollars. It would, goes the argument, be unfair so to hobble companies newly exposed to competition. More grandly, some spokesmen for utility interests have divined the existence of a "regulatory compact" that must be honored. This compact apparently did not cover the trucking, telecommunications, and aviation industries, where the same arguments could have been made but were not.

Networks of transmission lines are not in principle different from networks of roads.

The question is partly moral. Legal theorist Richard Epstein has persuaded many conservatives that regulation can constitute a "taking" of property. The argument for stranded-cost compensation postulates, sometimes explicitly, that so can deregulation. But what's being "taken" from the utilities is a captive customer base. When viewed in this light, proposals for compensation—that customers be required to pay an "exit fee" for leaving debt-ridden utilities or, what amounts to the same thing, that companies be required to pay an "entry fee" to serve those utilities' customers—are awfully hard to justify.

Nor is fairness the only issue. The entry and exit fees would inhibit the competition that deregulation is supposed to foster. Such are the difficulties of establishing competition without risk. Almost everyone is prepared to grant limited compensation in cases when regulators demanded specific investments from reluctant utilities. But airlines and trucking firms were allowed to go under, and free-marketeers should be willing to see some utilities do the same. As, indeed, the think-tankers are.

They're split, however, on a related question: whether utilities should be required to provide their rivals "open access" to their transmission and distribution facilities, charging only for upkeep. Adam Thierer, the Heritage Foundation's point man on electricity, argues that the utilities' previous monopolies justify this transitional regulation. He points out that common-carriage requirements have been a practical "halfway house" all the way back to the Roman Empire's roads, and defends open access as a way to level the playing field.



Luba Kolomytseva

The Edison Electric Institute has launched an impressive PR campaign on behalf of the utilities that want to go slow. A faster and purer approach is taken by the free-market think tanks, those utilities that think they would do well under deregulation, large independent power producers, natural-gas giant Enron, and major industrial electricity users. (Deregulation opponents call this last group the "big dogs," as in, "The big dogs eat first," and want to make sure that legislation doesn't tilt too far toward them.) Environmentalists are in a distinctive position, skeptical of deregulation but hostile to stranded-cost compensation, which would rescue some nuclear-power plants.

It is a mark, of sorts, of conservatism's rise that conservatives have gotten a piece of the lobbying action. Conservatives agree that certain federal regulations should be repealed and that environmental regulations should be avoided. Beyond that, they're all over the map. Conservative notables Vin Weber and Kellyanne Fitzpatrick are working for Edison. Haley Barbour (who's also doing PR for NATIONAL REVIEW) is working for Southern Power. Former New Hampshire Gov. Steve Merrill is chairman of Citizens for State Power, a group run by veteran conservative activist Craig Shirley. Charges of selling out are heard on all sides.

Shirley's outfit has been vigorously pressing the argument that federal deregulation is not needed and would violate states' rights. This particular argument was settled with the rejection of the Articles of Confederation; the Founders recoiled from the consequences of state impediments to the free flow of commerce. The free flow of electrons would seem to be a case in point. States can't tax you for crossing into their territory, and networks of transmission lines are not in principle different from networks of roads. For a state to protect its utilities would be analogous to a tax on interstate commerce: a violation, not a defense, of the limited-government principle of federalism.

FOR this reason, the most free-market electricity bill before Congress, that of House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R., Tex.), prohibits states from bailing out their utilities by compensating for stranded costs. Rep. Dan Schaefer (R., Colo.), who chairs the energy subcommittee, has a similar but less radical bill; its chief defect for free-market analysts is its renewable-energy mandates. Sens. Dale Bumpers (D., Ark.) and Jim Jeffords ("R.," Vt.) would open the door wide to Environmental Protection Agency regulations. Sen. Craig Thomas (R., Wyo.) has introduced a devolutionist bill.

None of these bills seriously tackles the public power agencies, from the Tennessee Valley Authority to the Power Marketing Authorities. The Federal Government provides a quarter of the nation's electricity, and deregulation could open up new markets to companies with massive hidden subsidies. The result could, perversely, be more rather than less government involvement in electricity markets.

Whatever the result, most people won't notice until it shows up in their electricity bills. Deregulation is a perfect example of what the perceptive political scientist P. J. O'Rourke has called "the dictatorship of boredom": the last one left awake gets to spend all the money. □

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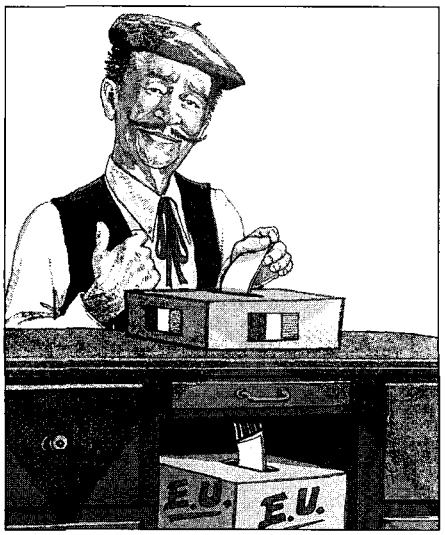
ON THE SCENE

France's New Elan

GERDA BIKALES



Frederick H. Carlson

PARIS

THE French face many distractions in the month of May—spring weather and three paid holidays that make for long weekends on packed roads, while the Cannes Film Festival, the French soccer finals, and tennis's French Open fill endless hours on television. Elections for the national legislature were not supposed to interrupt this busy schedule.

Yet, unexpectedly, France is in the midst of an intense campaign to elect a new National Assembly, the old one having been dissolved by President Jacques Chirac on April 21. The first, elimination round in this election has been called for May 25, a mere 34 days after the surprise announcement. The decisive round of voting will be held a week later, on June 1.

The surprise of the call for elections was somewhat blunted by a campaign of selective leaks and denials that had kept the rumor mills humming for nearly two weeks. By the time the president took to the airwaves for a formal announcement, the news had little shock value left.

Still, the decision remained curious. After all, the dissolved legislature had been heavily dominated by the president's own party and its allies. It had supported his prime minister, Alain Juppé, against frequent opposition calls for his head. It had loyally passed, earlier this year, a controversial proposal to control illegal immigration that had sent protestors into the streets of Paris by the tens of thousands. Now Chirac was sending these faithful troops back to face a sour electorate, ten months earlier than he need have done under their five-year mandate.

In his announcement, he explained that calling the elections early would avoid losing nearly a year in fruitless pre-election posturing. He enumerated many crucial decisions that must be made about modernization of the country's economic structures and its progression within the European Union. France needs a new *élan*, a new impetus, clearly embraced by its people. Those people must now express themselves on the extent and rhythm of the changes he proposes.

President Chirac, inaugurated in May 1995 to a seven-year term, started off badly. His hasty decision to resume nuclear testing in the Pacific provoked world-wide condemnation, which hurt France diplomatically and economically. In October 1995, the country was hit by sporadic strikes in the public-transport system that consolidated into a paralyzing month-long stoppage of all public transportation. The president remained invisible during this crisis, which lasted until Christmas. In December 1996 Chirac's government panicked and all but capitulated when private-sector truckers blocked major traffic arteries to demand retirement at age 55, on government pensions. Chirac's campaign promises of more jobs have fizzled. Clearly, a new *élan* would be welcomed by this administration.

One need not be a cynic to detect a calculating element to the president's call for early elections. His approval ratings have tumbled, to 35 per cent in a recent poll. His prime minister is even more unpopular. Furthermore, several scandals involving party finances are brewing, and they may explode before long. Calling elections now is an exercise in strategic damage control, a risk worth taking, as the outgoing majority coalition held 465 of the 577 Assembly seats, and thus can afford some losses.

Another advantage to early elections was the unprepared state of the opposition. The Socialists and Communists, who believed they had another year to get their act together, were forced to hastily mend their considerable differences and come up with a common plank to present to the voters. Even the extreme-right National Front, which had shaken the establishment in February of this year by winning an absolute majority in a local election, had no candidate slate or strategy for legislative elections. In a short campaign, getting a jump on the opposition can make a big difference.

Energized by Labour's good showing in Britain, the Left managed to cobble together a compromise platform. The partnership is clearly shaky, but the two parties can unite in confrontation with the ruling Right. The National Front, which had dominated the headlines earlier, has been sidelined in this polarized Right–Left debate. Its leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, has foreclosed a run for the legislature in order to be available for the presidency, should the financial scandals force Chirac to resign in disgrace. Le Pen's daughter carries the name into battle, in one of the few National Front strongholds.

The Socialists and Communists believed they had another year to get their act together.

Keeping things straight in a French national election isn't easy, but the vot-

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ers are a hardy lot. There are, to start with, more than six thousand candidates, most of whom will not survive the first round. Besides the four main parties that make up the opposing coalitions—Rally for the Republic (RPR) and Union for French Democracy (UDF) on the Right; the Socialist Party (PS) and the Communist Party (PC) on the Left—and the notorious National Front, there are numerous small ones, from Green to anti–European Union. All have presidents, secretaries-general, and various spokesmen. Furthermore, a French president runs through several prime ministers and many more cabinet ministers in the course of his seven years. Come election time, a profusion of has-been and would-be politicians expound endlessly on the news and talk-show circuit.

A somber leitmotif runs through the rhetorical overload: France's inability to sustain the *état providence* (welfare state). France can no longer afford its crushing costs. French businesses, among the world's most overtaxed and overregulated, are losing their competitive position in the global marketplace. Jobs dry up, revenues decline, and the state is burdened with massive debts. This is the painful message the ruling coalition is spreading. Unfortunately, it confronts a fickle electorate flirting with the Left's utopian promises of a 35-hour work week at full pay, retirement at 55, and 700,000 new state-subsidized jobs.

Austerity is also compelled by the calendar, which inexorably clicks away the days until March 1998, when France is to qualify for membership in the European Monetary Union. To qualify, countries will have to meet a stringent set of financial criteria that severely limit public spending and borrowing, the very foundation of France's largesse. In a 1993 referendum, the French narrowly accepted the Maastricht accords, but as the fateful date approaches, and social cutbacks loom closer, the campaign debate is unmasking the Maastricht imperative, showing it to be an arbitrary choice of criteria and of starting dates. Maastricht is not holy writ, after all.

Despite the temptation posed by the Left's promises, the notion that some hardships are inevitable for the sake of liberalizing the country's state-directed economy appears to be gaining ground. But deep sacrifices for the sake of a common European currency next year are losing out, perhaps because its claimed benefits are so abstruse. As much as anything, the election is turning into a contentious plebiscite on the people's readiness to make sacrifices.

The pollsters have been busy, grinding out a daily diet of public opinion. The Right, as Chirac foresaw, started out strong. But the Left, boosted by Labour's triumph across the Channel, has moved up and, on some calculations, has overtaken the ruling coalition. The National Front, pulling around 16 per cent of the popular vote, is poised to capture a couple of seats. These predictions are for the first round, which absorbs much of the protest vote. The French get down to business in the second round, for which there are some hesitant forecasts of a narrow win by the Right.

But whatever the outcome of the election, the road to renewed prosperity will not be easy to find. A victory of the Right will not put to rest the issue of monetary union, as next year's elections in Germany and Italy will reopen questions about the level of sacrifice Europeans should endure for its sake. Nor will a nod to the Left signal the happy return of the prodigal state—pipe-dreams always lead to rude awakenings.

Every evening, the Tour Eiffel proclaims in bright lights the days remaining in this millennium. On May 25, that number will be 951. Scary, *n'est-ce-pas*? Especially when you can't figure out where the new *élan* is leading. □

Mayday!

ANTHONY LEJEUNE

Roman Genn

LONDON

ON May Day, the traditional day for leftist celebrations (surely an ill-omened day for John Major to have chosen) the Conservative Party of Great Britain was massacred at the polls—literally wiped out in Scotland and Wales, pitifully reduced in England; the worst result within living memory. Oh, what crowing among socialists, liberals, and the ostentatiously muddle-headed! Oh, what kisses and hugs among the trendies of the acting, literary, and academic worlds! Salman Rushdie said that he and his friends were "weeping unashamedly, hugging strangers, cheering themselves hoarse, all reservations and irony swept away by the unleashing of joy."

Hardly noticed were those who mourned and feared. "Public affairs," said Dr. Johnson, "vex no man": but that was in happier times, when politicians meddled less with the lives of ordinary people. "The Conservatives did not deserve to win," lamented one Conservative wife, "but we don't deserve a Labour Government."

Actually, much of middle-class Britain, whose shift of allegiance determined the result, does deserve a Labour government. As the long-predicted fateful day approached, and in the excitement that followed, true colors were revealed: more generally, we saw how shallow political beliefs tend to be in a mass party democracy. Rats scuttled from the arras, Wets dripped from the ceiling, fair-weather friends spun around. Paul Johnson, the hardest of hard-line Thatcherite commentators, heaped praise on the Labour Party leader, Tony Blair. Ferdinand Mount, a softer conservative but one who briefly, years ago, worked for NATIONAL REVIEW, supported the Liberal Democrats. Max Hastings, editor of the London *Evening Standard*, urged his readers to vote Labour—while voting Conservative himself because he enjoys fox hunting, which Labour threatens to abolish.

A backbencher once promised to support Lord Melbourne "as long as you are in the right."

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"That's no use at all," replied the Prime Minister. "What I want is men who will support me when I'm in the wrong." On this occasion probably nothing would have made any difference. The weeks of campaigning had no effect. Regional differences and personalities barely touched the ubiquitous anti-Conservative swing. Europhiles and Euroskeptics tumbled equally: the Referendum Party merely gnawed at the dwindling Conservative vote in a handful of constituencies.

The Conservative Party was massacred at the polls, wiped out in Scotland and Wales.

But no sooner was the outcome clear than Europhiles and the Euroskeptics, roughly the left wing and right wing of the Conservative Party, began blaming each other. Some Conservatives think that John Major (who immediately resigned as party leader) has been persistently betrayed by those who, in the press and in Parliament, muttered or inveighed against him and refused to fall into line behind the Maastricht Treaty and the proposed common European currency. Others think Mr. Major betrayed his Thatcherite inheritance, particularly over Europe and taxation, and proved to be a weak, procrastinating leader. Less committed critics argue that procrastination was the wisest course; that he was chosen as leader after Mrs. Thatcher's assassination precisely to be more emollient; and that, by clinging to power for another six years, he safeguarded her legacy, even converting the Labour Party—thus, ironically, rendering it electable.

The scale of the May Day disaster stunned the members of the Conservative establishment. They said little, but what little they said showed—as has been evident for a long while—that they had simply no idea how they were perceived by the public in general or, most crucially, by grassroots Conservatives. Because they misunderstood the nature of their narrow win in 1992, they drew wrong, arrogant conclusions. A Conservative administration that leaves the country more heavily taxed, more oppressively regulated, and less independent than when it was elected has a political problem—which they never acknowledged. The nearest they came to apologizing for everything that has gone wrong was a campaign poster saying, "Yes, it hurt. Yes, it worked," as if the fault were the electorate's for whining about broken promises and a failed economic policy.

Of course the tidal wave of disenchantment that swept them away was largely irrational. Britain's economy is now in quite good shape, and most people have prospered. To call these past Conservative years a period of "greed" and the Conservative government "wicked" is great nonsense. Human beings are not greedier in one decade than another, and to regard any slight freeing of private enterprise or lowering of penal taxation as evidence of immorality speaks volumes about the liberal mindset. Where does one even start arguing with those who believe that paying a bit more in taxes (it's always just "a bit more") would produce a welfare-state version of Big Rock Candy Mountain?

The middle-class voters who switched to Labour are already paying half their income in various taxes. The Conservative government, pledged to lower taxation, was blithely spending nearly half Britain's entire national income. So how much worse can a Labour government be? Well, when Labour was last in office, the top rate of taxation was a ludicrous 98 per cent, exchange controls limited the amount of their own money that

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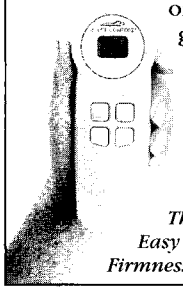

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Britons could take on holiday, and the country was half-paralyzed by strikes and sclerotic nationalized industries. "New" Labour is different, says Blair; he denies any intention of going back to those days. But Labour remains the party of social and economic intervention. What else defines any party of the Left?

Many of Blair's followers are unreconstructed Old Labour, strictly gagged during the election but with their instincts unchanged. Will his huge majority in Parliament enable Blair to keep the left-wingers in check or allow them free rein? Nobody knows. It is not encouraging that only 30 per cent of Labour MPs ever had a wealth-producing job: 54 per cent held jobs—social work, lecturing, local government—financed by the taxpayer. The rest were mainly employed by the party itself or by the unions, which are still the Labour Party's paymasters. These are not fun people; they resemble a puritanical, politically correct, Cromwellian army.

Old Labour distrusted the Common Market, as a capitalist institution that would block socialist measures: New Labour has recognized a kindred spirit in the bureaucratic, tightly regulated, highly taxed European Union. One of Blair's few explicit commitments is to accept the European "Social Chapter," with its extra costs and burdens on business, against which the Conservatives were holding out. The European issue may not have affected this election greatly, but it looms imminently ahead. Neither Labour nor the Conservatives have dared confront the stark truth—that, regardless of Britain's wishes, continental Europe is moving ineluctably toward a political federation.

Faced with this reality, how will Blair respond? How would John Major have responded? How will his Conservative successor respond? Again, nobody knows. The British public has never been consulted, and, throughout the election campaign, both party leaders kept eerily reticent.

Close links between the Blair camp and the Clinton camp might prove an Atlanticist counterweight, but the State Department has always connived with the British Foreign Office in pushing Britain toward Europe. Anyway, these links were formed mainly between spin-doctors and electoral strategists. Clinton's advisors watched, and learned from, the mistakes the Labour Party made last time. Blair's advisors watched, and learned from, the tactics that have given Clinton two victories. On both sides of the Atlantic vacuous calls for "change" and bridges to the future, and reassuring speeches with a minimum of content, proved a formula for success.

Britain's Conservatives now have to choose a new leader (shameless maneuvering was instantly under way), reconstruct their party, and begin the climb back. The size and nature of Blair's victory should hold exploitable seeds of disillusion: utopian hopes and incompatible promises cannot be fulfilled. Meanwhile, the Conservatives need a different formula. They need to be less vacuous. They need to recover what was as much beyond John Major as it was beyond George Bush—"the vision thing." They need to get some new ideas. Correction: they need to get back to some very old ideas which lately they had seemed to lose. □

Do-Gooders of the World, Unite!

MATTHEW SCULLY

Roman Genn

PHILADELPHIA

WHILE the attention of the nation was fixed on Colin Powell, President Clinton, and the three former Presidents here for the volunteerism summit, I headed a few blocks down the street for the "People's Summit," with featured guests Jesse Jackson, Dick Gregory, and Ramsey Clark. Now there's some real history for you. Presidents and four-star generals, they are as the flies of a summer. But Jackson, Gregory, and Clark—they are forever.

I never did find Ramsey Clark—he must have had prior protest commitments elsewhere—but there was good ol' Dick Gregory, angry and indignant. Angry at Clinton for chumming it up with "corporate America." Angry over the abandonment of the poor by Democrats. Scornful of this "sham" of a summit for rich do-gooders while the real problems in America went unaddressed. All those fasts over the years have left Gregory with an impressive air. With hair combed straight back, a grey, Biblical-looking beard, white shirt and black pinstripe suit, and generally manly bearing, he's a throwback from a time when protestors still looked dignified. These kids today in their open shirts, torn denims, and Nikes—what do they know about rabble-rousing?

Lucien Blackwell, a former congressman from the area, then rose to urge white and black people to come together—against corporate America. "Stop that race stuff," he implored. "It's a *class* struggle!" A local activist lawyer named Obu Fadeyibi called the summit a cruel hoax and a fraud and a distraction. "Somebody sits in board rooms and thinks this c— up! We'll have peace in our homes and in America when people are able to have jobs!" And finally Jesse, working the crowd beautifully: "I am . . . somebody!"

"Stop the violence!"

"Save the children!"

"Jobs!"

"Now!"

"I am . . . somebody!"

Class warfare, mass unrest, basic inequities, confrontation, Now!—I found it all very refreshing. It's nonsense, but hard, tangible, unprettified nonsense. The real stuff, with a little kick to it, and not a pale, perfumed imitation.

Over at the volunteer summit itself, you needed at every step to distinguish the volunteers from the summiteers. The latter seemed to bear out the Fadeyibi thesis. You could walk into most any conference room and hear things like: ". . . And so our goal and hope for the

Mr. Scully, formerly NR*'s literary editor, is a writer in Arlington, Va.*

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future is plan many more local and statewide summits like this, to *broaden* this great network, and to think not only nationally but globally. Our goal and hope and mission is to build bridges and to link the dots all over our nation and our country. And my message here today is that there's a lot of cynicism out there, and we can *break* that cynicism, and we can do that only if we *build* that bridge and keep the promise . . ."

Somebody sat in some boardroom, at a meeting with fellow bridge-builders and dot-connectors, thinking this was really visionary stuff—and great PR. It's not enough for the corporate sponsors Gen. Powell was constantly calling upon to "give something back" to donate money to good causes and leave it at that. There must be a global strategy, a broad network, more conferences, and more speeches until cynicism has been broken once and for all. If this is the voice of corporate America, I'm with Lucien Blackwell in the class struggle.

Other summiteers could be heard holding forth at the inevitable "Plenary Roundtable: The Role of the Media." Sensing a great void in America, a dozen or so journalists had hastened to the scene to volunteer their opinions. "Volunteerism is the big story of the latter part of the twentieth century. . . . Volunteerism is *redefining* what news is. . . ."

Walking from yak session to yak session, however, you could meet the actual volunteers themselves. There was criticism from conservatives to the effect that the summit was all fluff or, worse, an attempt to collectivize private volunteering. Well, no. Most of the people here were just the sort conservatives have been extolling forever, who volunteered long before their good deeds were "celebrated" and will keep doing so when they are not.

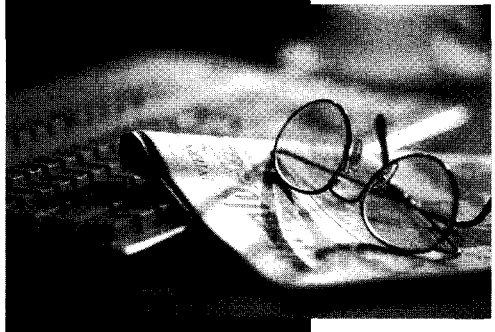
The highlight for me was seeing Bill Russell and Bob Lanier, the basketball greats, ambling by in the hallway. They volunteer as mentors for city kids, Russell since his retirement decades ago, and both seemed embarrassed to be here talking about it. The most inspiring person I saw was a 15-year-old named Amber Lynn Coffman, who got a presidential award for starting Happy Helpers for the Homeless in her Maryland hometown. In a video before the presentation, at a "Celebration of Service" gala hosted by Oprah Winfrey, we saw her preparing lunches for the poor, handing out blankets, and describing how when she was eight she saw Mother Teresa on television and wanted to be like her.

There were lots of Ambers here, and they are each, as Rev. Jackson might say, "somebody." No one seeing them in action left here feeling alarm at a coming collectivization. Humble admiration was more like it.

Leaving aside, of course, the sight of America's Happiest Helpers helping themselves to a good share of credit for all this. They never merely adopt causes, the Clintons, they absorb them until everything is soaked in sentimentality and self-regard. "I am here," declared Mr. Clinton, "because I want to redefine the meaning of citizenship." Prodded on by his incessant "challenge to look beyond ourselves," we now enter "the era of big citizenship." Mrs. Clinton's performance at Independence Hall, a screechy summons to national mobilization, was incredible.

There is evidence that the practice of selfless giving actually pre-dates the Clinton years. But then, no idea or virtue ever really achieves true significance until the Clintons themselves have discovered it. And then, a new era. Time to "celebrate" volunteerism, redefine it, analyze it, coordinate it, have Maya Angelou write a poem about it, maybe mandate and nationalize it. Having already invented compassion, public ethics, bi-partisanship, meaning in politics, and reinvented government, they have now invented private charity. Now if they would only invent modesty. □

Cal Thomas
William Buckley
Pat Buchanan
Ariana Huffington
Thomas Sowell
Robert Novak
Suzanne Fields
Tony Snow
...and many more.



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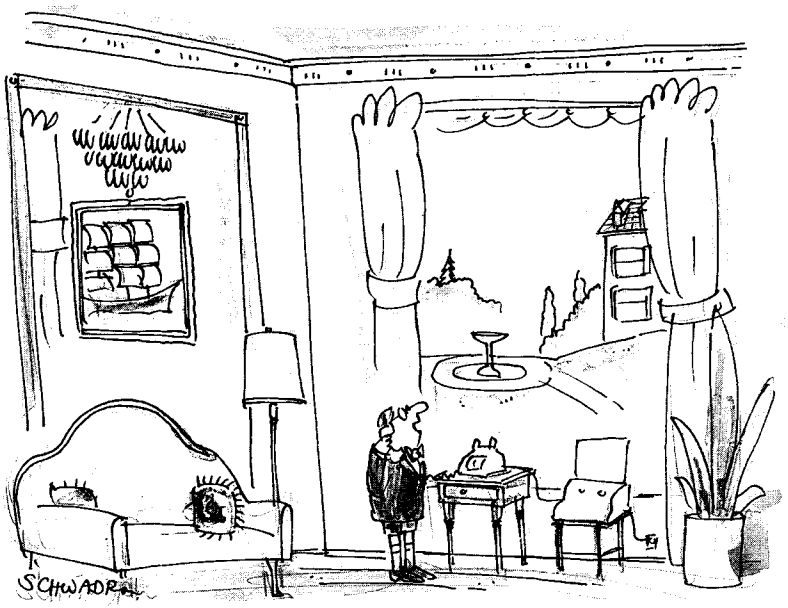
help!!!

It's about Time

Mr. Clinton is boycotting Burma:
Their deportment got under his derma.
Every contract in force
Will continue, of course,
But the terra we're tramping feels firma.

—W. H. von Dreele



"Bertram, how about faxing me your math homework?"

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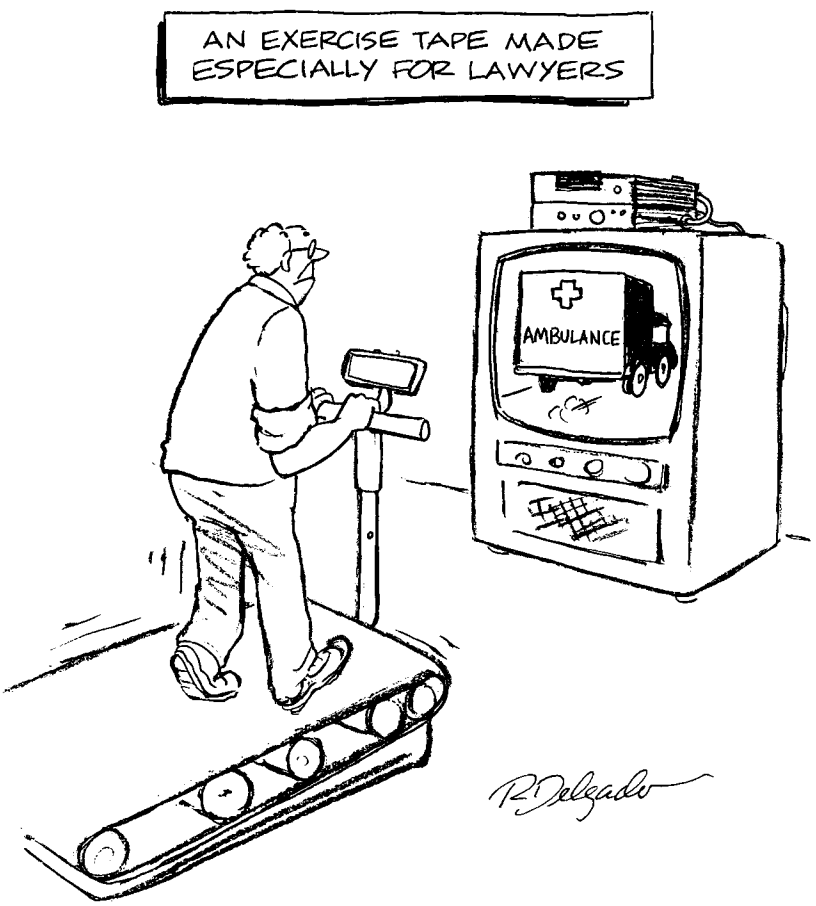
"Now that he's retired, he likes to sit outdoors and drink to rush-hour traffic."



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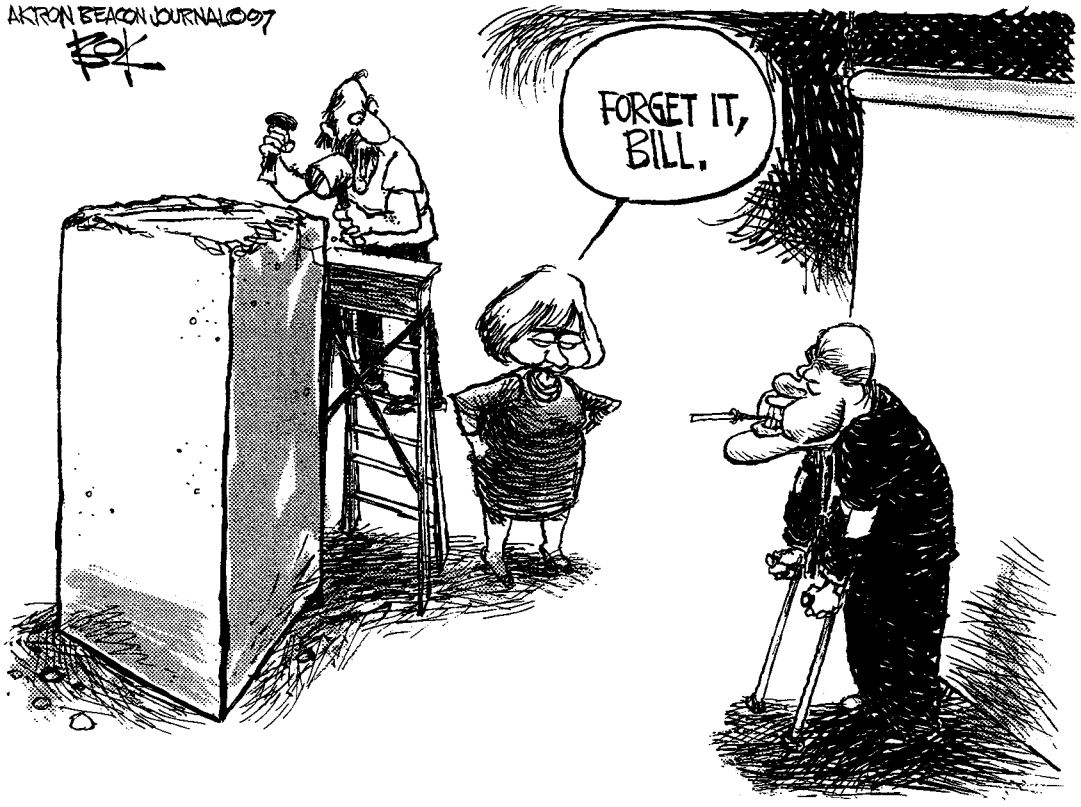

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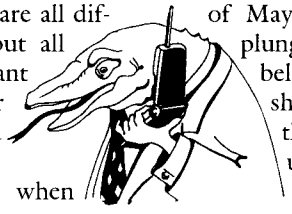
GEKKO

ALONG with catalogues for enticingly photographed garbage, my mailbox is stuffed with pitches for foolproof computerized "investing" systems. "Investing," in this context, means speculating in stocks or commodities. The systems are all different in some respects, but all similar in the most important ways. For $399.95 or $179.99 or whatever, you get a bunch of disks for an application program that, when you crank in price data from some service, identifies trends. Since the trend is always your friend, you then just bet that it goes on—up (generally), or down. The bet takes the form of buying options or futures or even actual stocks.



The first tip that things might not be that simple should be the price of the system. After all, why should hedge funds or other successful investors need anything more than one of these programs? The second is the observable phenomenon that trees don't grow to the sky. That seems like a laughably obvious point, and yet, in the first week of May, there were some very big institutions and some very rich people who learned the lesson all over again when the one-way bet on the dollar against the yen suddenly turned into a two-way bet.

The largest group of people who were betting on an uninterrupted rise in the value of the dollar against the yen were what are known as "delta hedgers" or "dynamic hedgers." Their programs, while certainly more expensive and more intensively supervised than the mail-order kind, work on much the same principle of trend=friend. As the yen fell in value with greater speed during the first part of this year, they put on more and more short positions in the currency.

There were substantive reasons for this, such as the outflow of money from Japanese investors buying American bonds. You may recall that, back in March, I wrote a longer piece in *NR* projecting an April rally in the U.S. Treasury market based on just this Japanese buying spree. But markets, like life, don't move in a straight line, and there was bound to be a pullback. It came rather violently in the first week of May, when the yen/dollar rate plunged from around 127 to below 120. The reason for the sharpness of the plunge was those very trend followers, using that magic software, who, having bought all at once, sold all at once.

Of course that cruel mistress, the market, hasn't finished toying with them. The yen will probably fall once again, and then rise again. Each time, a little more of the trend followers' capital will be taken away. The "momentum" traders will lose and the "contrarian" investors will win, as they tend to in a sideways market. That's why, a decade or two from now, people cleaning out attics will pick up dusty packages of disks with those trend-following programs and wonder just what they were thinking when they sent away for them.

■ Some weeks ago, before the UK elections, I suggested that you buy the British ten-year gilts and sell their French counterparts short. While there may still be some vig left in this trade, particularly if the so-called Left wins the French elections, it's time to put greed aside and collect your profits. A win by the so-called French conservatives would give a boost to the Europhiles, who would be long on the country's bonds. And the pleasant surprise that the bond world got when the Labour government gave the Bank of England its independence will begin to lose its novelty value.

There will be so many opportunities to play the ultimate unraveling of the pan-European dream over the next few years that there's no need to hang onto any one for too long. You can use the profits for your next vacation on the Continent. The dollar goes a lot further now—ha ha.

■ Last fall, I thought that the stock of Echostar, the satellite-dish company, would be a disappointment relative to that of its competitor, U.S. Satellite Broadcasting. My basic thesis was that the cost of maintaining and extending Echostar's constellation of satellites and marketing its receivers would drain the company of cash before it reached the end of the rainbow. USSB, on the other hand, promised a less spectacular but more certain payback, thanks to its lower fixed costs and better cash position.

Rupert Murdoch threw a monkey wrench into this seemingly reasonable projection back in February when he signed a deal—in pencil, as it turned out—to buy half of Echostar in order to implement his satellite-TV strategy. As part of the deal, he may or may not have promised to put up $200 million to tide Echostar over a short-term cash problem. After the announcement, Echostar' stock soared while USSB's lurched along in the mud.

Well, the deal broke up, Echostar's shares are sinking, and Charlie Ergen, the entrepreneur-CEO, is suing Murdoch for long-distance-number sums. In his court filings, Ergen kind of admits he's going to have trouble surviving without a pretty quick transfusion. He thinks that ought to come from Murdoch and News Corp. Murdoch, on the other hand, does not seem to think that Echostar should be the object of his charity, and, after a closer look, doesn't seem to think that Ergen's receivers, which are sold at a discount to their cost, are good enough.

So I think I'll be proved right after all. —JOHN DIZARD

"That concludes my prepared statement. I will now evade questions from the audience."

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A Little Learning

When judges allow 'experts' to exhibit their private theories in court, justice is the victim.

JAMES Q. WILSON

IN 1976 Beverly Ibn-Tamas shot and killed her husband, Yusef, in his medical office in Washington, D.C. She was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to spend one to five years in prison. Beverly testified that she had been subjected to repeated beatings and threats during her four-year marriage to Yusef. Other witnesses, including Yusef's first wife, also testified to his violent behavior. Events on the day of the shooting were disputed, but what is clear is that Beverly shot Yusef twice, once from close range. Obviously, however, the jury did not think the crime was premeditated (hence second rather than first degree), and the judge found her a sympathetic defendant (hence the short sentence). Beverly's lawyers appealed, however, claiming that the court had improperly excluded the testimony of Dr. Lenore Walker, a psychologist who described a condition called battered-woman syndrome, and who had frequently served as an expert witness.

A divided appeals court told the trial court to hold an evidentiary hearing on the issue of admitting Dr. Walker's testimony. It did and concluded that Dr. Walker had not established that her methodology was generally accepted by experts in the field. The conviction was upheld. Beverly served one year in prison.

When expert witnesses offer to testify, the judge must rule on the admissibility of their testimony. In doing so, he must answer, among others, these questions: Is the testimony based on facts that are "beyond the ken of the average layman"? Does the expert have sufficient skill and knowledge in this field to make the testimony valuable to the jury? Will the testimony unduly prejudice the jury? The appeals court said that Dr. Walker's testimony might have "enhanced Mrs. Ibn-Tamas's general credibility" and "supported her testimony" that her husband's behavior had "led her to believe she was in imminent danger." The court compared Beverly Ibn-Tamas to Patty Hearst, who had argued three years earlier in her trial for bank robbery that expert testimony would "explain the effects kidnapping, prolonged incarceration, and psychological and physical abuse may have had on the defendant's mental state at the time of the robbery."

Just what could expert testimony have said about this "mental state" that "the average layman" could otherwise not know? The appeals court did not really answer that question, and based on what one can learn from Beverly Ibn-Tamas's trial, the answer in her case seems to be—nothing at all.

A few years later, however, the New Jersey Supreme Court undertook to give an answer in reviewing the case of Gladys Kelly, who had been convicted of reckless manslaughter and sentenced to five years in prison for having stabbed her husband to death with a pair of scissors. Gladys claimed that during their seven-year marriage her husband, Ernest, had abused her. Though some of her claims were disputed, let us assume they were true. On the fatal day they had a fight on the street that began with an argument over money. Ernest pushed Gladys to the ground, but two bystanders separated them. Gladys went off to find her daughter and returned with a pair of scissors. At this point the facts are unclear. The defense claimed that Ernest rushed at Gladys with his hands raised and that she, fearing for her safety, stabbed him. The prosecution claimed that Gladys started the fight, chased Ernest after threatening to kill him, and then stabbed him. The state Supreme Court reversed the conviction because expert testimony by Dr. Lois Veronen about battered-woman syndrome had been excluded.

Mr. Wilson is James Collins Professor of Management and Public Policy at UCLA and the author of Moral Judgment, published by Basic Books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., from which this article is adapted. *© 1997 by James Q. Wilson.*

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In reaching this decision, the court drew heavily on amicus briefs filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, the New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women, and the American Psychological Association. It discussed the lamentable extent of wife abuse in the United States, complained of the bias against women in law-enforcement agencies charged with investigating abuse cases, and reviewed the theory of battered-woman syndrome. As interesting as these observations were, they did not address the central issue: whether expert testimony would have aided the jury in reaching its verdict. Since the jury had refused to convict Gladys of murder (instead agreeing on a verdict of reckless manslaughter), it had already accepted a mitigation, no doubt one arising out of her history and circumstances. And since the judge had sentenced her to the minimum term, he also must have understood that there were mitigating factors. The expert testimony, then, had to be designed to aid the jury in deciding that this was justifiable homicide—a case of self-defense.

But what could Dr. Veronen have contributed to that issue? Not that Gladys's fear of being killed by Ernest was reasonable (traditionally a requirement in pleading self-defense); all the facts bearing on that—and they were disputed facts—were already available to the jury. The Supreme Court conceded that. The value it found in the proffered testimony was that it would help dispel two "myths": the first being the "popular misconception" that battered women are "masochistic and actually enjoy their beatings, that they purposely provoke their husbands into violent behavior"; the second, that "women who remain in battering relationships are free to leave their abusers at any time."

As evidence for the first of these myths, the court cited a book by Dr. Walker. But in fact there is no evidence in Dr. Walker's book that the public believes battered women are masochists who enjoy provoking their husbands. Subsequent research has failed to find such evidence.

The second so-called myth raises a serious question that is not easily answered. No doubt many people, hearing of the abuse a woman has endured, ask themselves why she doesn't simply leave. The explanation advanced by Dr. Walker and others is that battered women suffer from "learned helplessness." The phrase was coined by Professor Martin Seligman, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, after studying the behavior of dogs who were confined in harnesses in such a way that they could not escape painful electrical shocks. They soon ceased to struggle, and when presented with a way out they chose not to take it. When the experiment was over, they had to be dragged from their cages. The dogs had lost their will to control their environment. Professor Seligman later described depression in humans as learned helplessness. Dr. Walker asserts that women who have experienced the battering cycle—an increase in marital tension, then a physical attack, followed by a period of loving contrition—become helpless in much the same way as do shocked dogs. They believe they can neither control their environment nor predict the effects of their own behavior. Poverty, concern for their children, and the indifference of police and social-welfare agencies may reinforce this sense of helplessness.

No doubt some battered women (and some women who have never been battered) display these symptoms. But the evidence supporting the view that most battered women feel helpless is sketchy. Mary Ann Dutton, a psychologist deeply sympathetic to the plight of battered women, has written that women exposed to violence and abuse "do not respond similarly" because there is no "singular 'battered-woman profile.'" Some feel psychologically trapped and try to stick it out, others solicit help from friends or call the police; still others resist and fight back. Some go to shelters, some do not. Many of these coping strategies turn out to be ineffective; but, by choosing them, abused women do reveal themselves not to be as passive as shocked dogs in a cage. Some evidence suggests that it is precisely the most severely abused women who are most likely to leave their husbands. We do not yet have good ways of predicting who will leave a relationship and who will remain helplessly trapped within it.

Moreover, killing one's abuser seems quite inconsistent with the theory of learned helplessness. Dr. Seligman's helpless dogs did not bite their abusers, but Dr. Walker's helpless women killed theirs. Dr. Walker's own evidence seems to contradict her conclusions. A helpless woman should feel that her life is governed by external forces rather than by her own choices, but the battered women Dr. Walker studied displayed an internal, not external, locus of control. People who believe that they, and not external forces, govern their lives cannot plausibly be called helpless, especially when in some cases—the women who kill their husbands—they act on that belief.

None of these issues have prevented appellate courts from accepting the view that there is a phenomenon called battered-woman syndrome about which expert testimony will have significant probative value.

THE position that so many judges and legislators have taken is scientifically suspect, philosophically debatable, and legally unnecessary. The science is suspect for a variety of reasons [see "Trial by Expert," *NR*, March 10]; indeed, the problems with bringing social science into the courtrooms are perfectly illustrated by battered-woman syndrome. We do not know what proportion of battered women develop a syndrome (and how many develop the syndrome without being battered), and the evidence for the existence of a syndrome was mostly elicited by interviewers who were predisposed to find it. The American Psychiatric Association has declined to include the syndrome in its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (*DSM-IV*) despite intense lobbying by its supporters. Dr. Walker herself is an advocate, who displays a tendency to find a "syndrome" where the facts do not support it. When she discovered that many of her women did not display feelings of helplessness and did not have low self-esteem, she expressed surprise and went on to dispute or discount the women's own accounts. She explained that in "reality" these women have no control over their lives, whatever they might say to the contrary; in fact, their denial of helplessness reflects their desire to "gain approval" from Dr. Walker. By 1989, five years after she expressed her surprise at the poor fit between her hypothesis and the data, she

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had overcome whatever reservations the data had occasioned and now wrote confidently that the "typical battered woman has poor self-image and self-esteem."

Philosophically, it is hard to see why a jury should consider such a syndrome to be an excusing condition if some women (and for all we know, most women) who are battered and who kill their abusers do not suffer from the syndrome. Syndrome sufferers would have the benefit of expert witnesses testifying on their behalf, while equally abused but non-syndrome women would not. Describing a battered woman as some courts have done—as dependent, brainwashed, terror-stricken, or psychologically paralyzed—reproduces rather than eliminates the very stereotypes to which most of us object. Anne Coughlin states it well: the battered-woman claim, designed "ostensibly to refute a variety of misogynist stereotypes," requires accused women "to embrace precisely those insulting stereotypes that the defense was supposed to explode, and it endorses the assumption that women are incapable of the rational self-governance exercised by men." The syndrome defense is, by definition, not available to a woman with a sturdily independent cast of mind and a record of making her own decisions and managing her own affairs. If she kills an abusive mate, she is on her own in claiming self-defense; it is only the passive weak-willed woman who can use the syndrome to bolster her self-defense claim.

A jury that is free to acquit a guilty but likable defendant is also free to convict an innocent but detestable one.

Legally, the syndrome may add something to the traditional claim of self-defense, but that something is ill-defined. It is a mistake to say that the old law of self-defense was inherently masculine. As Professor Susan Estrich has pointed out, the rules of self-defense "exist not so much to define manly behavior as to limit manly instincts—in order to preserve human life." It might be manly, she observes, to respond to an insult with deadly force, but it is illegal because the law requires that there be imminent danger of death or grave bodily injury.

It would be difficult to cite or imagine a criminal defense that was applicable solely to a female defendant. Ordinary fair play, to say nothing of the equal-protection clause of the Constitution, suggests that a defense available to one sex be available to both. In February 1989 Paul Kacsmar killed his brother, Francis. At his trial he claimed he acted in self-defense. Paul, a man in his forties, lived with his mother and brother in Pittsburgh. Paul was ill (he had suffered a stroke) and a somewhat wimpy fellow; Francis was a combat veteran who liked to practice judo. They did not get along. Francis thought of himself as the head of the house; Paul resented his claims. There were many arguments over the years and a few fights. Most of the fights involved pushing and shoving, but sometimes punches were thrown, usually by Francis. Paul denied ever being the aggressor and claimed that Francis sometimes threatened to "beat the hell out of him." On the night of the shooting, Francis accused Paul of not doing his share of the housework. The argument escalated, and Francis hit Paul a few times with his fist. After Paul broke free, he ran to his room, picked up a gun, came back downstairs, and without warning shot the unarmed Francis five times.

Paul was convicted of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to five to ten years in prison. On appeal, a Pennsylvania superior court reversed his conviction on the grounds that the trial judge had not admitted expert testimony that Paul suffered from "battered-person syndrome." The court reasoned that if a woman could suffer from battered-woman syndrome, a man could suffer from battered-person syndrome. The Pennsylvania court repeated the erroneous cliché that expert testimony on such syndromes can dispel the "myths" that abused people are "masochists who are responsible for the abuse." It did not explain who held such a myth or why anyone would suppose that Kacsmar's jury had entertained it.

When such cases as Gladys Kelly's or Paul Kacsmar's came to the attention of appellate judges cognizant of the problem of abuse, they had two choices: they could reassert the traditional law of self-defense and remind lawyers and trial judges that there were ample ways for getting such a defense to the jurors and clarifying for them the distinctions between justification, excuse, and mitigation; or they could help invent a new standard of personal accountability based on poor social-science research and dubious theorizing and commend it to trial judges and jurors without clarifying its relationship to the law of self-defense or foreseeing its capacity for protean transformation and growth.

THEY chose the latter course. By itself this change might have had little effect, but it was compounded by the willingness of many jurors to judge the motives as well as the actions of defendants. Jurors will judge the moral worthiness of victims despite the fact that the law rests on the proposition that, except for certain conditions (for example, the victim was trying to kill his killer), all lives are of equal moral worth. They will often weigh the motives and character of both victim and defendant and adjust their verdicts accordingly; in extreme cases they will engage in what legal scholars call jury nullification by acquitting a defendant despite overwhelming evidence of guilt. Our sympathy for some defendants may lead us to feel that the jury's refusal to convict despite conclusive evidence is a sign of its humanity. But a jury that is free to acquit a guilty but likable defendant is also free to convict an innocent but detestable one.

Justice is a difficult ideal, vulnerable to attack by benevolence on one side and vengeance on the other. To the extent that the criminal courts allow victims to be put on trial, they foster this siege and allow an affluent defendant to introduce expert witnesses and other evidence that engages the sympathies of jurors while debasing standards of conduct. The law is, or ought to be, a tough master that, by holding us all to a high standard of personal accountability, produces the behavior we wish to see and reduces the opportunity for privilege to corrupt the system. □

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THE GREAT GEPHARDT

Tricky Dick

Liberals are looking for a presidential savior. They probably can do no better than Dick Gephardt.

RICH LOWRY

IN the fall of 1985, an ambitious fifth-term congressman wrote an article for the *Cato Journal*—a publication of the libertarian Cato Institute—inveighing against tax loopholes. As entitlements and defense spending grew, the congressman explained, "The only place we politicians could find to spend money was the place that nobody noticed—the tax code." So, "Different groups of individuals were handed tax breaks, tax goodies, loopholes, incentives, or whatever you want to call them. In essence, what was taking place was a forgiveness of taxation in return for a change in some kind of behavior."

All of this was a bad idea, he argued, because no one knew the ultimate consequences of the meddling, and it distracted from the goal of keeping tax rates low. By a year or so later, Rep. Dick Gephardt, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, presidential aspirant, and former *Cato Journal* contributor, had gone AWOL from Sen. Bill Bradley's tax-reform bill, which he himself had co-sponsored, and that sought the simplified tax code about which he had written so earnestly. Gephardt was too busy campaigning in Iowa, talking up ideas like mandatory agricultural production controls.

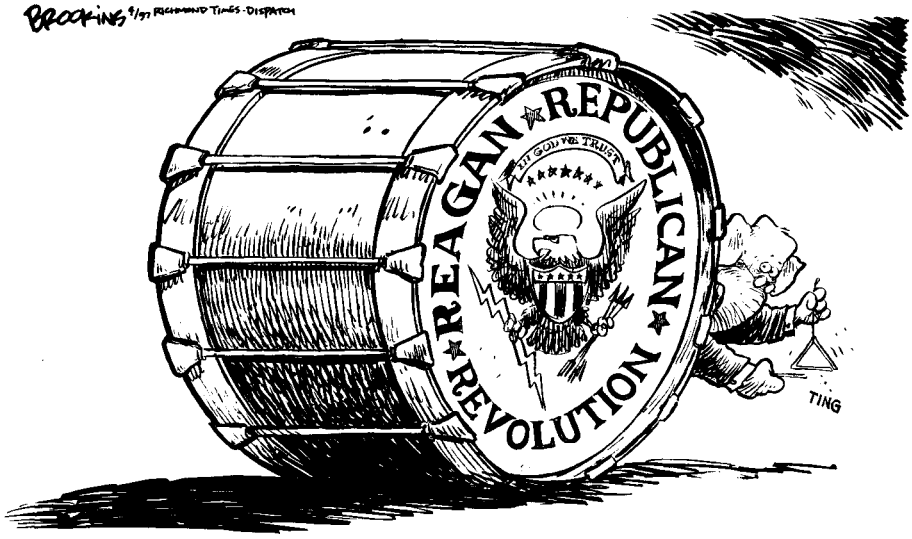
Today, of course, influencing behavior and spending money through the tax code has become a Gephardt staple. His "Families First" agenda last year included: a $1,500 tax credit for full-time tuition in a student's first year of college and another $1,500 in his second year (provided he stays off drugs and maintain a B average); a $10,000 tax deduction available to families for college tuition, as well as a deduction to pay the interest on student loans; an increase in the amount a small business can deduct for purchases of machinery and equipment; and, finally, various arcane changes to make the existing tax credit for child care more generous.

Perhaps no politician in American life has a record as deeply at odds with itself as Dick Gephardt. In the mid 1980s, Gephardt's views didn't just evolve; one version of his political persona went extinct as another sprang up in its place. Gephardt, in many ways, represents a classic American story of striving and of self-fashioned identity. He's a Beltway Jay Gatsby, who wiped away his past to advance his ambitions and—in an unhappy twist—today finds himself in a tougher political position as a result. On behalf of both the House Democrats, who are in his care as Minority Leader, and his own presidential designs, Gephardt now must fight a rear-guard battle to save a once-honorable tradition in American politics that has increasingly gone to seed.

Press accounts of Gephardt often mention the fact that he wore a St. Louis Cardinals cap as a youngster. It's a beguiling image because there is something of Roy Hobbs about Gephardt: strawberry blond hair, blue eyes, a six-foot frame. His dad was a milkman turned real-estate agent. As a kid, Gephardt was inspired by that most American of best-sellers, *The Power of Positive Thinking*. He went to study at a Big Ten college. Then he made his political start as an untouchable alderman—"Little Dickie Do-Right," they called him—in a St. Louis known for its shady politics.

When he won a congressional seat in 1976, it was as a pro-life Democrat willing to buck his party's national leadership on economics and defense. He worked with David Stockman to defeat President Carter's health-care price controls, and he voted for Reagan's 1981 tax cut. He opposed minimum-wage increases, the United Auto Workers' domestic-content bill, federal funding for community mental-health centers and battered-women's shelters, and the creation of an independent consumer-protection agency. He voted for both the MX missile and the B-1 bomber.

Gephardt's social conservatism extended well beyond abortion, which he sponsored a constitutional amendment to ban. He also supported school-prayer and anti-busing amendments. He opposed extending the period provided for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and supported tuition tax credits. If anything, he was to the Right of President Reagan on these issues. He called Reagan "a disappointment to those in the Congress who represent



Mr. Lowry is NR*'s national political reporter.*

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constituencies for whom . . . social issues represent the government's resolve to reverse the misguided social trends of the '60s and '70s."

BY the mid 1980s, however, the story-line of Dick Gephardt's career had begun to get tangled, partly because the constituency he represented had changed. Gephardt's district in south St. Louis was heavily Catholic and—though Democratic—basically conservative. But in 1984 Gephardt became chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, which was a direct descendant of the New Deal. Then Gephardt began to run for President, which necessitated wooing feminists, union workers, gay activists, trial lawyers—the whole gamut of liberal constituencies.

In seeking the 1988 nomination, Gephardt essentially camped out in Iowa. He is a relentless and adroit door-to-door politician. The problem was that Gephardt had no message besides talking about how hard he was campaigning—until an aide stumbled onto how much it supposedly cost ($48,000) to buy a Chrysler K-Car in South Korea. Gephardt's staff shaped the factoid into an electrifying ad, featuring Gephardt warning that unless the Koreans play fair they'll "be left asking themselves: how many Americans are going to pay $48,000 for one of their Hyundais."

Another Gephardt aide came up with the signature line, "It's your fight, too," which Gephardt repeated to great effect all over Iowa. Suddenly, Gephardt the moderate Washington insider had become Gephardt the man of the people, fighting the insidious forces, domestic and foreign, that were causing America's decline. "We're losing our standard of living," Gephardt intoned. "The middle class is starting to shrink. Those just interested in paper profits don't want change."

It was a stunning makeover. Gephardt's press secretary, Don Foley, quit, complaining to friends, according to *Time* magazine, that "Some days [Gephardt] doesn't even know who he is." The new Gephardt nonetheless won the Iowa caucuses. It turned out to be a pyrrhic victory because he had no funds left to fight Super Tuesday, and he came under withering attack from all the other candidates (a devastating Michael Dukakis ad featured a red-haired tumbler as a flip-flopping Gephardt). Gephardt had to retire to fight the South Koreans another day.

He returned to the House, where he remained popular with his colleagues. Gephardt is generally credited with having able staff, and being a good listener. ("He's a got a line, 'I hear ya,'" says Democrat-turned-Republican Rep. Billy Tauzin [La.]. "He doesn't actually hear you, but he says it.") As Gephardt moved up to Majority Leader, he worked the PACs with a skill to rival that of champion PAC shakedown artist Tony Coelho. He could afford to spend $2.5 million an election cycle keeping his sometimes restive district quiet, while in Washington he did the routine arm-twisting to produce 218 votes for piece after piece of legislation.

Until 1994. The GOP "revolution" transformed him from heir-apparent to the Speakership into the leader of a dispirited minority. The supple Gephardt responded in two ways. He rushed out a tax-cut plan (for "middle-class" families earning less than $75,000) and his own "flat tax" proposal (with five rates). He united the party behind a minimalist "Families First" plan that he sold mostly in defensive terms: "[it] may be the only way we can truly recapture the faith of the people we serve—and show them that we will never again lose touch with the things that really matter to them."

But the chastened Gephardt often gave way to the unrepentant one. He denounced GOP Medicare legislation as "ridiculous and obscene," and dubbed congressional Republicans "trickle-down terrorists." He kept the pressure on President Clinton not to sign a budget deal, thereby keeping the lines of attack open on Medicare, Medicaid, the environment, and education. So disastrously did Republicans misplay their hand in 1995–96 that, absent John Huang, Gephardt would have won the Speaker's chair. As it happens, he now must plan his renewed assault on the GOP in 1998 and his likely challenge to Al Gore in 2000 simultaneously.

Gore and Gephardt have obvious similarities. "They're both part of that passionless, careerist generation of blow-dried, baby-boom-era television politicians," says Terry Michael, a former DNC press secretary. Indeed, both are known for their "message discipline" (i.e., being boring as hell). Gephardt has an eerie, almost android quality to him—as spontaneous as a metronome. In an interview with *Mother Jones* a few years ago, he was asked how he developed his listening skills: "I don't think you can be a good listener unless you're a good listener. I think it's something that you really have to do, and if you really do it, then you can do it. If you don't do it, then you can't do it."

In their first bout in 1988, Gore would sometimes criticize Gephardt from the Left; now their positions will be roughly reversed. Gephardt has staked his ambitions on two ideas, one political, the other economic. The first is the notion promoted by Democratic strategists like Robert Borosage of the Campaign for America's Future and the former Clinton pollster Stanley Greenberg that Clinton's 1996 victory was the result of his renewed appeal to "downscale voters," i.e., "non-college-educated, low- and middle-income people with household incomes under $50,000 a year." These new Clinton voters were "overwhelmingly the people most alarmed by the Republican assault on social programs and most receptive to the President's regulatory initiatives in support of the family."

Gephardt has an eerie, almost android quality to him—as spontaneous as a metronome.

Gephardt will offer his own regulatory proposals under the auspices of the second idea, that alienated workers need government to protect them both from rapacious bosses and from unyielding international competition. In a sense, Gephardt is working the same theme as in 1988, but he has shifted the terms from a grand notion of American decline to the anxieties of individual workers. As he puts it, "America is living through a transition as titanic as the Industrial Revolution. . . . That change can benefit all Americans, if we help them *prepare* for it."

For Gephardt, that means a mommy-state liberalism that relies less on confiscatory taxation than on an enveloping web of soft social programs and workplace regulations. Gephardt wants to make schools full-time hubs for the delivery of social services. Though education and welfare "programs were not intended to serve as substitutes for broken or dysfunctional families," he re-

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cently wrote, "maybe they should be—not just in poorer communities, but in all communities." Gephardt envisions government pushing businesses to provide child care and other social benefits. In 1995, he flirted with the idea of a government-enforced "Code of Conduct" for business. "We can condition any tax break to business," he mused, "on the adoption of the Best Practices Code of Conduct."

A GORE–Gephardt race could, then, in theory, present a real choice for the Democratic Party. Gephardt would represent the old-style strategy of starting with the base of unions, minorities, and other Democratic interest groups, and then buying the middle-class elderly with entitlement demagoguery and Reagan Democrats with protectionism. Gore would put much more emphasis on Clinton Administration centrism. The question is whether Gore will actually stand and fight. "There is a real debate within the debate about what Al Gore is up to," says one New Democrat observer, "and which way he's going to go."

At the AFL–CIO's winter meeting in Los Angeles, Gore seemed inclined to go the pander route. In what one union boss called the "most pro-union speech" of the Clinton Administration, Gore promised new regulations to take businesses' records in dealing with unions into account when awarding federal contracts. Such regulations—which congressional Republicans believe the Administration will issue any day now—would give unions new leverage worth countless millions of dollars. But in L.A., Gore also had to defend NAFTA, even as Gephardt lashed out against the agreement.

Trade is one of two major issues that will make it tough for Gore to fudge his differences with Gephardt. The other is the budget. The deal struck between the White House and congressional Republicans is the capstone of Clinton's effort to recast Democrats in a centrist image. Gore will be intimately involved in selling it. Gephardt, in contrast, is likely to savage it. He will break out the distribution charts to attack the GOP capital-gains cut as a sop to the rich—a tack that has worked for Democrats in the past—and criticize the rest of the plan for its "harsh" spending restraints.

On trade, Gephardt will continue to argue that bum agreements are causing the U.S. trade deficit to soar, costing Americans their jobs. Gephardt opposes any extension of NAFTA to Chile unless the agreement is eviscerated with strict labor and environmental provisions, and he is pushing for congressional veto power over China's entry into the World Trade Organization. The White House—clearly nervous over the issue on Gore's behalf—has always said it wouldn't push for "fast-track" authority to negotiate an extension of NAFTA until the budget is off the table. But, even if the White House blinks on trade, it will be impossible for Gore to co-opt Gephardt's position on the issue.

Which is probably a good thing for the Vice President. Former Clinton advisor Dick Morris calls Gephardt "God's gift to Al Gore," because he provides Gore such a ready liberal foil. Indeed, there is an irony to Gephardt's career in general and his maneuvering for a presidential run in 2000 in particular. If Gephardt held the same views today that he held 15 years ago, he would be perfectly positioned to catch the centrist wave in the Democratic Party. Instead, his power base in the party pushed him steadily Left. And his niche in a 2000 primary race potentially creates a similar dynamic: the further left Gephardt goes, the more secure his base for a challenge to Gore—but the less likely that challenge is to be successful.

"That's the deal he cut with the devil," one GOP operative says of Gephardt's positioning himself with an eye to gaining advantage in Democratic primaries, "and now he's supposed to get some return for that. Let's see if it's there." It may well not be. Labor will provide Gephardt plenty of early money, but the unions have been steadily losing clout in the party. And while it is true that the Democratic rhetoric on Medicare hurt the GOP last year, the attacks were so effective because they came against the reassuring backdrop of a President who was a new kind of Democrat. Gephardt, seeking to revive the old-time Democratic religion, may find himself in 2000 again resembling Gatsby, whose "dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him." □

But Are They Catholic?

When religious organizations accept government funds, they make a Faustian bargain.

RICK SANTORUM

A PRIEST known for his support of a politically activist clergy once noted that anger could be an effective teaching tool for the Church, if it prompted reflection. By that standard, the potential for an enormously "teachable moment" has arisen as a result of a recent speech I gave at the annual dinner of the Catholic Campaign for America. In that speech, I expressed my concerns about Catholic Charities U.S.A. and its loss of a distinctively Catholic identity and mission. From some quarters, the response to my speech was angry indeed.

My critique of Catholic Charities U.S.A., the central, national organization for local Catholic charities, started with the facts. Depending on who's talking, Catholic Charities receives 65 per cent or 62 per cent of its total budget from the government. This reliance on public funds, I argued, limits its ability to offer the fullness of the Catholic vision to those who seek its help. In the light of my comments, there are three questions that need to be addressed: 1) Is such an assertion reasonable? 2) If it is, *why* is the religious nature of a charity altered when it receives public funds? 3) What is the charitable mission that should be carried out by a non-profit service that calls itself Catholic?

First, was my assertion reasonable? Yes. I am not the only one concerned that dependence on government funding has rendered non-profit organiza-

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tions increasingly vulnerable to pressures to restrict their religious mission —or at the very least the outward expression of that mission. And such a development is not without precedent. There is broad agreement that many of our Catholic universities and our Catholic hospitals have been vulnerable to tremendous pressures to compromise their identity, practices, or teaching because of government funding.

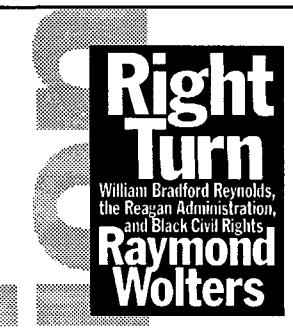
Even John Cardinal O'Connor, a staunch supporter of Catholic Charities who does not agree with my overall analysis of the situation, warned in a 1995 homily to Catholic Charities officials that increasing dependence on government programs posed a "grave problem." As he put it: ". . . I believe a grave problem that can confront any institution today that tries to do good works is the problem of *increasing dependence on government*. . . . It must be ten years ago now that I gave a talk at St. John's University to people working in Catholic hospitals, in Catholic Charities in general. I warned that dependence on government is fraught with peril and that I saw this creeping dependence. I saw us tailor[ing] programs to fit our charity into the requirements of governmental regulatory procedures. . . . Ten years have passed and what I feared, I think, is now an ever greater peril. With dependence on government funding always we must expect governmental control."

A DISTINCT difference exists between the very characters of public and private welfare. In being given large amounts of government funding, Catholic Charities officials argue that they are being recognized as more effective than many of their governmental counterparts. What these officials fail to ask is why this is the case, and how long it can remain so. In accepting large amounts of government funding, non-profits help to erase the crucial distinction between public and private welfare and cause a shrinkage of the very kind of social assistance that should be the work of the private sector. Note that, of an approximately $1.8-billion budget, Catholic Charities, in 1995, received over $1.2 billion from the government. With this kind of funding, Catholic Charities becomes identified with, and even risks being absorbed by, governmental entities. Their agenda can become its agenda; their way of providing social assistance can become its way.

In a just-published book, *When Sacred and Secular Mix: Religious Non-Profit Organizations and Public Money*, Stephen Monsma warns that our religious non-profits are in jeopardy. After surveying 766 religious non-profit groups, divided into three categories—universities, international aid, and child-protection agencies—Monsma concluded that the religious integrity of such organizations is, indeed, at risk. In order to determine the effects of public funding, Monsma developed what he termed a "religious-practices scale," on which he identified 15 indicative practices of religious entities, such as having religious symbols or pictures in facilities, spoken prayers at meals, and encouragement of religious commitment in clients. Among the Catholic child-service agencies, 50 per cent acknowledged "informal references to religious ideas by staff with clients," only 9 per cent acknowledged that they "encourage religious commitments by clients," and, again, only 9 per cent acknowledged "only hiring staff in agreement with religious orientation."

In his research, Monsma found a clear, though not overwhelming, inverse correlation between religious practices and public funding. Of those child-service agencies that scored low on the religious-practices scale, 44 per cent reported receiving a high percentage of their annual budget from public funds, as compared to 28 per cent of those agencies that scored high on the religious-practices scale.

Equally revealing were Monsma's findings about governmental pressures



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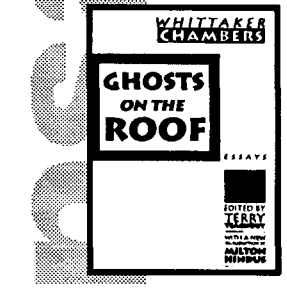

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on religious non-profits to curtail their religious practices according to the standard set by the Supreme Court. That standard declared that those organizations deemed "pervasively sectarian" are ineligible to receive public funds. The polling results were broken down into various categories. When the non-profits were identified according to religion, a full 33 per cent of Catholic child-service agencies cited government pressures to curtail their religious practices. When they were identified by their score on the religious-practices scale, 39 per cent of those that scored high reported government pressures on religious practices.

Religious non-profits of various denominations are vulnerable to restrictions in their religious practices.

Monsma has noted that while such pressures are not comprehensive, their capacity sporadically to restrict selected religious non-profits from fulfilling what they define as their mission does not bode well for any religious non-profit. His research also confirms that among organizations feeling the most pressure, conservative Protestant and Catholic non-profits figure prominently. As he states: ". . . in spite of the religious autonomy currently enjoyed by most of the religious non-profit organizations receiving funds . . . there are warning signs on the horizon indicating their religious autonomy is in an unsafe, precarious position . . . practices as simple as offering a prayer before meals, requiring children to attend worship services . . . have at times been drawn into question." He asserts that if religious practices crucial to an organization's particular faith's tradition were limited, then it "would virtually cease to exist as a religious organization." He warns us, "No one should minimize the stakes at issue here."

And I don't. Which brings me to my second question. How is the vision of a religious non-profit, particularly a Catholic non-profit, altered when it accepts considerable public funding? The power of charity that remains distinctively Catholic is in its ability to impart Catholic teaching to those it serves. But can a Catholic vision truly be present when Catholic teachings are not upheld?

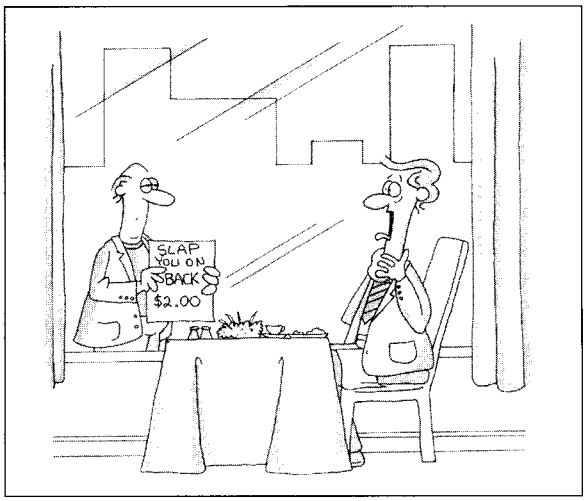
Consider the following experience of a priest in a large diocese who was completing academic work in clinical psychology. Part of his course required that he enter a supervised internship at a Catholic Charities clinic. During the interview the supervisor presented to this priest (we'll call him Fr. John) three hypothetical counseling situations in order to assess his qualifications for the position.

Scenario #1: A woman comes to the clinic suffering from depression. She has decided to abort the child she is carrying. Fr. John was asked if he could treat her for depression without interfering with her decision to abort. When Fr. John replied that he would consider the depression and the contemplated abortion as related and that he would advise her against the abortion, he was informed that he was disqualified from counseling in abortion-related cases.

Scenario #2: Two homosexual men come for counseling to assist them in their relationship. Fr. John was asked if he could assist them without interfering with their sexuality. When he expressed his intention of supporting the Church's teaching on sexual unions, he was told that he was disqualified from counseling homosexuals.

Scenario #3: A couple in the process of divorce comes for counseling. Fr. John said he would make every attempt to encourage the couple to save the marriage. The same assessment is made of Fr. John's qualifications as in the first two scenarios.

Fr. John reported that the entire "atmosphere of the place was hostile to Catholic ideas." When he confronted the clinical psychologist who was supervising him with this assessment, he was told: "We get government funds, so we are not Catholic."



THIS vulnerability is not limited, of course, to Catholic non-profits. Religious non-profits of various denominations are vulnerable to real or potential restrictions on their hiring as well as on their religious practices. It is, in fact, conservative Protestant non-profits, according to Monsma's research, that experience the most pressure.

Some religious non-profits simply will not take government money for fear of being co-opted. They want to be free to meet needs as they identify them. Among those that do accept the money, it can induce them to behave pre-emptively—that is, to erect self-imposed restrictions so as to avoid the pressures experienced by others. Such precautions can have a profound impact on the way these non-profits do their work. In Monsma's study, one-fourth of religiously based child-protection agencies reported that they feel they are, morally or legally, bound to refrain from some religious practices because they accept government funds.

Even more telling is the high-profile case of San Francisco's Archbishop Levada and his dispute with the city's Board of Supervisors over its domestic-partnership law. Because Catholic charity organizations in San Francisco held city contracts—worth approximately $5.6 million—Mayor Willie Brown and others sought to force those non-profits to comply with the law requiring employers to give spousal benefits to unmarried heterosexual and to homosexual live-in partners. At first, Levada balked and threatened to sue the city, claiming constitutional guarantees of religious freedom. He then did an about-face and announced a "compromise" with the Board of Supervisors that—to many—didn't sound like a compromise at all. It went like this: "An employee may designate a legally domiciled member of the employee's household as being eligible for spousal equivalent benefits."

That an archbishop could be induced to compromise an unambiguous teaching of the Church because of several million dollars in city contracts speaks loudly and prophetically of the vulnerability of

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religious non-profits to government pressures. By capitulating in this manner, the Church loses its unique opportunity to be what it literally is: a visible sign, in this world, of another. It also loses its unique capacity, as a mediating institution, to instruct and to bear public witness to a life rightly ordered.

WHICH brings me to the final question: What is, and what should be, the Catholic face of charity? In my view, the Church is most charitable when it is itself. (I borrow this, in part, from Fr. Avery Dulles, who has noted that the Church best contributes to the political order when it is itself.) This is a liberating rather than a restrictive view of charity. When we talk of the Catholic face of charity, who is likeliest to come into our minds? Many would answer: Mother Teresa. Why? Because, I would argue, she enters directly into the lives of others. She embodies the sacramentality of charity by personally, and with a clear religious identity, ministering to the poor. She walks among them, literally. And by doing so, she reaffirms to the poor their inherent, God-given dignity.

From a Catholic point of view, I understand our obligation to the poor to be non-negotiable. In fact, it is my support of this commitment that prompted my concern about government funding of Catholic Charities. There are a variety of ways in which we can meet the needs of the poor; I believe that our charity should begin at the humblest level. Our charitable duty should be the one closest to us, which allows us to achieve a solidarity with the poor. To "suffer with" the poor is a critical and effective form of charity. It is this ennobling part of charity that can be tragically lost when non-profit activity becomes too sterilized by bureaucracy.

Pope John Paul II, in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, warns of the dangers of excessive or pre-emptive state intervention in human affairs, because such intervention usurps "from society and business systems the functions which are properly theirs . . . By intervening directly and depriving society of its responsibility, the social-assistance state leads to a loss of human energies and an inordinate increase of public agencies, which are dominated more by bureaucratic ways of thinking than by concern for serving their clients." Thus, a view of charity that centers around the welfare state is simply not enough. To ignore the spiritual roots of social disintegration and fragmentation is to possess a dangerously incomplete approach to social renewal and social healing.

In contrast, Fr. Fred Kammer, the president of Catholic Charities, has suggested that payment of our taxes is "an embodiment of one's moral obligations to society." In fact, payment of our taxes is, at best, an incidental way in which we fulfill our moral and social obligations. As the Pope has noted, the more the state intervenes, the more individual efforts are displaced. This displacement has considerable moral consequences as it takes individuals further and further from one another. In addition, the most compelling embodiment of our moral obligations is ourselves—our own persons. We assist people in realizing their full human dignity by identifying them as moral agents, possessed of free will. I do believe that the government has a role in helping to provide a safety net for the poorest and most vulnerable, but it is a different role from that of the Church.

On a final note, I regret any offense I might unintentionally have caused, with my remarks, to those employees of Catholic Charities who work diligently, and in a spirit of true Christian charity, on behalf of the poor. My own recent visits to some local Catholic Charities agencies in Pennsylvania have been both instructive and heartening. I saw much that spoke eloquently of the proud Catholic tradition of compassion and community. I met with those who daily travel and walk among the poor and see in them the face of Christ. It is precisely because of them that I believe we must remain vigilant when confronted with potential threats to this freedom—this privilege—to walk, suffer, and serve with the poor. □

Unilateral Armament

Until China's position in the world is better defined, Western countries should stop selling arms to Peking.

RICHARD D. FISHER JR.

ASIA's most dangerous arms race is the race to arm China. In fact, as the Clinton Administration looks the other way, the world is witnessing perhaps the most geostrategically dangerous transfer of power since Germany and other states helped create the early Soviet Union's military–technical base. The Administration's lack of concern might be acceptable if the country in question were not firing nuclear-capable missiles to scare its neighbors, not enforcing claims to territory hundreds of miles from its shores, and not selling both nuclear and missile technologies to rogue states. China, however, is doing all these things and is none too subtle about its intention of eventually displacing American power in Asia. The day when China will be able to do so is drawing nearer as its People's Liberation Army gains access to cutting-edge foreign military technology.

Since the early 1990s, the main runners in the race to arm China have been Russia and Israel. The Bush Administration's and the European Union's 1989 post–Tiananmen Square sanctions barred arms manufacturers in the United States and Western Europe from selling weapons to China, which they had been doing at a modest scale for much of the 1980s, in part to help contain the Soviet Bear. And so, after 1989, China turned, cash in hand, to newly desperate Russia. Israel, meanwhile, never curtailed its military relationship with China and now is Russia's closest competitor for the People's Liberation Army market. And having tired of losing lucrative PLA contracts, the Europeans are re-entering this market.

The visit of Chinese leader Jiang Zemin to Moscow April 22–25 provided the most recent opportunity for both

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sides to affirm what they now call a "strategic partnership." Such Russian–Chinese summits might be reassuring if they proved that the Russian government was in control of what its manufacturers were selling. But the reality is that it is not. As long as the politicians in Moscow get their cut of the money, Russia's numerous weapon manufacturers are free to sell their most advanced products to China. Ironically, this is resulting in greater Russian dependency on Chinese money. And this, in turn,

While the French have recently sold stealthy naval frigates to Taiwan, Paris expects to profit far more from sales to China.

enables China to penetrate even deeper into Russia, to the level of individual engineers, who increasingly must sell to the Chinese in order to feed their families.

An incident in Ukraine recounted by *Izvestiya* early last year illustrates the desperation in the former Soviet Union. Three Chinese missile engineers were caught by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) trying to smuggle out ICBM engine plans, sold to them at the Yuzhnoe missile plant in Dnepropetrovsk. The missile in question was later revealed by the *Washington Times* to be the 10-warhead SS-18, with a range of 6,000 to 8,000 miles. (China does not yet have such multiple-warhead ICBMs.) The SBU tried to deport the engineers. China protested. Not only were the Chinese allowed to depart "without incident," but, adding insult to injury, the local SBU chief and his boss were fired!

Until 1994 Russia tried to restrict sales to less capable export variants of the various weapons—still a substantial increase in capability for the PLA. China now has about fifty Sukhoi Su-27 fighter aircraft, which are reported in the Russian and Chinese press to have outperformed the top-of-the-line U.S. F-15 fighters in exercise encounters. China's Su-27s are the only fighters in Asia to be armed with a helmet-sighted short-range air-to-air missile. This means the pilot need turn merely his head, not his whole aircraft, to lock his missiles onto a target—a decisive advantage in combat. Also sold during this period were two less capable versions of the *Kilo*-class conventional submarine, about a three-generation advance over most Chinese conventional submarines.

By about 1995 China had parlayed its financial leverage into access to more advanced military systems. Two more *Kilo* subs to be delivered next year are the most advanced version, rated by the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence as being about as quiet as the improved version of the U.S.'s *Los Angeles*–class nuclear-powered attack submarine, meaning that U.S. ships and subs will have to work much harder to find them. Russian technicians are now helping China build its next class of nuclear attack submarine, which can be expected to incorporate advanced quieting technology and carry better torpedoes and even cruise missiles.

An early-1996 agreement allows China to co-produce about two hundred Su-27s over 15 years. Last November, during China's large Zhuhai International Air Show, a Sukhoi engineer revealed that this agreement would allow China to build all new versions of the Su-27. These include attack and advanced air-superiority variants, and a naval version which could arm the aircraft carriers China is seriously considering building. But as mastering advanced construction techniques may take several years, China reportedly is considering another direct purchase, this time the Su-30MK. This all-weather attack version of the Su-27 is able to deliver precision-guided munitions, a capability the United States demonstrated so vividly during the Persian Gulf War. With the Su-30MK, China will probably also have access to a range of Russian laser- and TV-guided bombs and missiles. At Zhuhai, Russia also marketed its Ilyushin Il-78 aerial-refueling aircraft. With multiple refueling, the Su-30MK could potentially conduct precision strikes as far away as Guam and northern Australia.

Russian technology may also assist the future development of Chinese cruise missiles. Sources in Taiwan note that Russia also is trying to sell China its Kh-65SE air-launched cruise missile. This subsonic missile with a range of 240 miles is a shorter-range variant of the AS-15 strategic cruise missile, but could easily be modified to achieve longer ranges. With its highly accurate inertial and satellite guidance systems, the Kh-65SE could form the basis of a future Chinese Tomahawk-like cruise missile.

Sino-Russian naval cooperation reached a new level in early 1997 with China's purchase of Russian *Sovremenny*-class missile destroyers, revealed in January by the *Washington Times*. This modern ship will teach China much about current ship design and combat-system integration and provide China with its first dedicated anti-submarine helicopter. But most alarming, the *Sovremenny* will carry the SS-N-22 supersonic anti-ship missile, originally designed to counter advanced U.S. *Aegis* radar-equipped cruisers.

ISRAEL, in contrast to Russia, maintains a significant degree of control over its military relationship with China, the primary motivation for which appears to be financial. Israel may also gain better access to China's leadership, but the value of such access is debatable. In the early 1990s, Israeli Aircraft Industries became the main advisor for China's J-10 fighter-aircraft program. This aircraft will bear a very close resemblance to IAI's Lavi fighter, which was canceled in 1987 after receiving about $1.4 billion in U.S. development assistance. A Chinese wind-tunnel model of the J-10 displayed last year confirmed its Lavi pedigree and showed the aircraft armed with the PL-8 air-to-air missile, a copy of the Israeli Python 3. The U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence projects that the J-10 could be more maneuverable than the F/A-18E/F, which is slated to be the U.S. Navy's next main combat aircraft.

Of equal concern is Israel's sale of its Phalcon AWACS radar to China. This sale was stalled until Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent summit with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who, according to Israeli press reports, reversed two years of opposition to selling Israel the Il-76 transport aircraft, which China wants to carry the Israeli radar. This deal may also include advanced Israeli electronic and signal intelligence systems that will better enable the AWACS aircraft to identify targets. China wants this aircraft not only to defend its airspace, but also the better to conduct air-superiority missions and coordinate air attacks. U.S. Air Force and Navy AWACS aircraft were a key factor in the Allied coalition's ability to dominate the air during the Persian Gulf War.

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Israel also is reported by the respected British publication *Flight International* to have received Chinese funding assistance to develop a land-attack variant of its *Delilah* anti-radar cruise missile. The *Delilah* is said to have a 240-mile range, though the new attack variant may have a longer range, and it uses both inertial and satellite guidance to convey high accuracy. This could become yet another source of technology upon which China could base its next generation of cruise missiles.

Following the visit to Europe last September of PLA leader Liu Huaqing, the Europeans are ready to throw out their 1989 arms-sale ban. The ultimate result of this move, ironically, will be to increase the temptation for American firms to push for the same.

Last summer the British electronics firm Racal sold a reported six to eight of its Searchwater airborne radar systems to China. This radar was developed after the Falklands War to provide small British aircraft carriers with an effective helicopter-mounted airborne warning system. China intends to put the system on its Y-8 transport aircraft, which is similar in size and performance to the U.S. C-130 transport. With this radar China will receive an economy-class AWACS that will be useful for air-combat missions and for providing over-the-horizon targeting data for the SS-N-22 supersonic cruise missile.

The latest version of the Searchwater is able to use the U.S. Joint Tactical Information Display Systems, a computerized network that allows aircraft, ships, and ground forces to receive the same tactical combat information. It is a relatively new technology which allows different armed services to cooperate more effectively. Access to JTIDS would surely help China develop this capability.

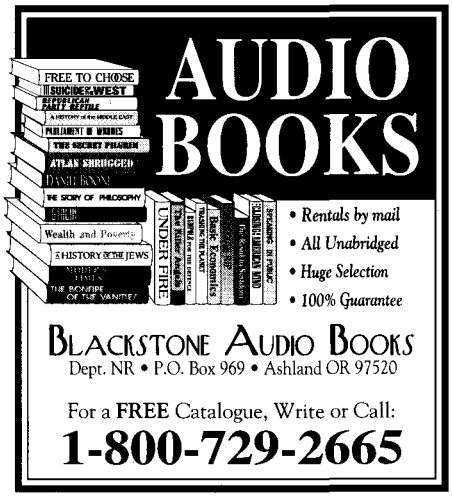
During his early-April visit to Peking, French Defense Minister Charles Millon made it clear that France expects to resume military sales to China. While the French have recently sold advanced combat aircraft and stealthy naval frigates to Taiwan, Paris expects to profit far more from sales to China. Last October the *Far Eastern Economic Review* revealed that France was considering selling China its soon-to-be-decommissioned 30,000-ton aircraft carrier *Clemenceau*. The carrier itself would be sold for a song, provided that French arms industries were given contracts worth billions of dollars to outfit it with their latest electronics and weapons—to include even the Rafale, France's newest fighter/attack aircraft.

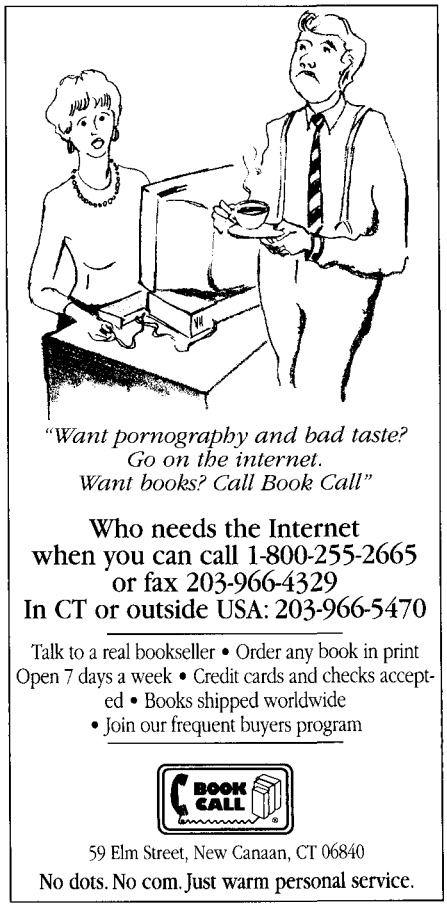
That France would even consider selling China an order-of-magnitude increase in its strategic naval capability is appalling, but other potential European assistance is almost as alarming. At Zhuhai last November a Chinese engineer working on advanced missile guidance systems revealed to the author that China is working on a terminally guided warhead for the 1,100-mile-range DF-21 ballistic missile. Sources in Taiwan note that the warhead will be radar-guided, and thus similar to the now defunct U.S. Pershing II missile, which had a phenomenal accuracy of within a 50-meter-radius circle. But to achieve this accuracy the warhead computer needs very detailed digital maps of the target, and this is where the Europeans may make a critical contribution. Last year China announced a new radar satellite program, ostensibly for geographic survey missions, but one that also could produce the digital maps needed for the DF-21. The British company GEC-Marconi and Germany's Daimler-Benz Aerospace concern were reported to be interested in helping China build this new radar satellite.

BUT China's interest in advanced space systems does not stop with better reconnaissance satellites. Recent Chinese aerospace-engineering articles indicate a possible revival of anti-missile and anti-satellite programs that were suspended during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. China is already building the HQ-9, a rough copy of the Russian SA-10, which may have a limited anti-missile capability. These programs are critical because next-century U.S. weapons systems, like unmanned combat aircraft or missile-armed "arsenal ships," are heavily dependent on satellites for reconnaissance, command, and control. China also is known to be interested in advanced laser weapons; Russian military laser engineers have been sought out by the Chinese as well as the Americans. People's Liberation Army literature also exhibits an intense interest in new "information warfare" technologies and techniques that the U.S. hopes to incorporate into next-century weapons systems.

Official U.S. estimates, and those of many academic analysts of the PLA, usually note that China would need about twenty years to build a credible threat to U.S. forces in Asia. Even if the PLA were to acquire impressive equipment, the reasoning often goes, it would take years to train personnel and develop essential new doctrines and logistic capabilities. While it is true that China lags woefully in these areas, it is working on them. The exercises around Taiwan in 1995 and early 1996 were part of an effort to begin assembling combined-arms operations assisted by strategic missile forces. In an act never

(Continues on page 61)

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

May 11, 1997

Dear Rusty,

I'm on Air Force Two dashing back to the District after a terrific couple of days in Redmond, Washington, with my new best friend, Bill Gates!

Gates threw a little get-together at his house in Redmond. Loads of bigwigs were there from the private sector, but I was the highest-ranking person from the public sector.

What does that mean? It means Gates has made up his mind as far as Campaign '00 goes.

And what does that mean? It means that I won't have to worry about the guy pulling a Ross Perot and running himself, I won't have to worry about someone else being anointed the "candidate of the future," and best of all, I won't have to worry about fundraising any more.

When I figured this out (actually, Tipper figured it out first, and led me through the steps) I realized that in one quick trip to Washington State, I could sew up the '00 election.

The minute we cruised up the driveway, I knew I was right. The house is gigantic. You could hold 6 fundraising coffees, 7 overnight stays, 2 prayer breakfasts, and still have room for a Gold Circle Policy Briefing.

All this was on my mind as I saw our host. "Hello, Mr. Gates," I said, "what a lovely house!"

He thanked me for coming and reminded me to use a coaster (it's so reassuring to see other public figures who haven't lost their sense of humor, either). I came straight to the point: "Mr. Gates, let's talk '00."

"That's great, Al," he said, "but really, could you just use a coaster? My wife will kill me."

Just then, Mrs. Gates joined us. "What a lovely house," I repeated. "With a little work you could turn it into a self-sufficient bio-sphere." At that point, she excused herself.

"Can I call you Bill?" I asked. Mom and Dad always told me to be formal with anyone whose net worth is in excess of $7.6 billion.

"Sure, Al," he said.

"Well, then, Bill," I said, "let me just say that I've admired you for a long time. I mean, Windows 95, Word, those are great products—"

"What about Office 97?" Bill asked.

"That's great too, Bill," I said.

"Internet Explorer? MS Money? Windows NT?"

"All good."

"Just good?"

"No, no. All great, I meant to say. Really great. But what I wanted to talk about was—"

"Al, let me interrupt you. I find that long conversations, from an efficiency standpoint, are meaningless."

"Really?" I said. "I find them energizing."

"Let me continue," he said. (You know, Rusty, the rumors are right: he doesn't have good people skills.) "You're running for President in 2.7 years—"

"Well, I haven't announced it officially—"

"Do not speak. Let me just scroll through the whole document, then you can append any message you wish."

"Oh. Okay."

"You're speaking again. Now. I am simply too busy to be President, and, anyway, from a time-value perspective, it's delegatable. Let me put it like this: I would like to license your candidacy."

"I'm sorry?"

"I would like to license your candidacy for President."

"Um . . . I'm still a little lost, Bill."

"Of course you are. It's a surprising offer. Microsoft, as you know, almost never licenses anything. We're pretty much 100% in-house. But as you might guess, the skill-set of our employees doesn't match that required of the President. At least, for now. Plus the compensation package is a little paltry. I mean, options and so forth."

"I'm still lost."

Bill took a deep breath. "Ookay. I can see why you're in government work. Look. I'd like to pre-emptively take you off the market. Make you the official Microsoft candidate."

I was thrilled! "Really?" I cried.

"Really," he said. "Microsoft has a history of taking mediocre products with behind-the-times technology and making them industry leaders."

"Sign me up!" I shouted. This was better than even Tipper predicted.

We shook hands. "Thanks, Bill," I said.

"You're welcome, Al," he said. "Though, from now on, we'd like you to call yourself MS-Al."

"Miz Al?"

"Not 'miz.' M-S. It's all per our licensing agreement. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have one other person here I need to buy."

And he sauntered off. He's a strange guy, Rusty, but I like the way he thinks.

MS all the best!

MS-Al

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

Messages from the *Titanic*

JEFFREY HART

WHEN *HMS Titanic* went down on the night of April 14–15, 1912, with the loss of some 1,500 lives, it immediately became the subject of moralization and symbolization. We can propose many meanings of the disaster, but one must be ruled out immediately: there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the great ship itself, a masterpiece of marine engineering. To blame the ship is libelous. The disaster was the product of inexcusable human error.

Captain Edward Smith, for all his years at sea, did not understand the ship with whose command he was rewarded just before he was to have retired. Before the fatal voyage, Smith had experienced close calls with the *Titanic*, as its displacement threatened nearby vessels with loss of control and serious damage. None of this seems to have left any impression on him or his officers. They behaved as if the *Titanic* were just another ocean liner, and did not begin to understand that its size made a radical difference in its performance.

There was no excuse for Captain Smith to steam into an ice field of which he had had repeated warnings at 22.5 knots. An ordinary ship might have turned in time to avoid the fatal collision, but the forward momentum and the turning ratio of this ship were entirely different. When the *Titanic* hit the iceberg, Captain Smith, complacent in these dangerous waters, was not even on the bridge.

Frederick H. Carlson

What, then, *is* the meaning of the *Titanic* disaster? The recent opening of a Broadway musical [see p. 53]—along with a new crop of TV movies and a forthcoming feature film—provides an occasion for reconsidering the question that has haunted the world for 85 years. In the spring of 1913, Professor John Erskine delivered the Phi Beta Kappa address at Amherst College. The *Titanic* is a pervasive presence in his address, entitled "The Moral Obligation to Be Intelligent," which was subsequently printed as an essay. Many found this essay uncomfortable—indeed, not quite respectable. That we have a moral obligation to be kind, to tell the truth, to perform our appointed duties, was of course widely recognized. But do we have a "moral obligation to be intelligent"?

Let us, Erskine says of the *Titanic*, "reflect that recently, after full warning, we drove a ship at top speed through a field of icebergs. When we were thrilled to read how superbly those hundreds died, in the great English way, a man pointed out that they did indeed die in the English way, and that our pride therefore was ill-timed; that all that bravery was wasted; that the tragedy was in the shipwreck of intelligence. That discouraging person was an Irishman." It was George Bernard Shaw, who made a career out of being uncomfortably right.

Note that Erskine says, "*we* drove a ship at top speed." The commanders of the *Titanic* were all English. The "we" reflects the pervasive identification between the American and the English in 1912. This was expressed in the idea that "the Anglo-Saxon race," as it was then casually referred to, was superior both culturally and politically, perhaps even physically. The Germans were admitted into this club. Newspapers noted that many Finns had been lost who might have made useful citizens. But in the Board of Trade and Senate inquiries into the disaster, anyone who behaved badly was routinely thought to be a "foreigner," "Italian," or maybe even a "Gypsy." In 1912 a "foreigner" was anyone not from North America, the British Isles, or Northern Europe.

Benjamin Guggenheim, who was Jewish, appeared on the deck of the *Titanic* with his manservant in evening dress, desiring to die as a gentleman. John Jacob Astor, the richest man aboard, died stoically in the upper-class Anglo-Saxon way. Isidor Straus, the owner of Macy's, a Southerner and a gentleman, died with his wife, who refused to go without him. The English orchestra played almost until the final moment. For men of that sort in 1912, the Anglo-Saxon idea of the gentleman was virtually a categorical imperative. Better death than a smidgen of dishonor.

Erskine points out that in much of English literature the good and admirable characters are much less intelligent than the wicked ones. On the good team, we can line up Ophelia, Juliet, Desdemona, Cordelia, Miranda. On the wicked side, we find Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra, and Goneril—all clearly more intelligent than the good women. Iago is more intelligent than Othello and Cassio combined. Erskine does not mention Hamlet, who is certainly intelli-

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gent. I suppose Erskine might have argued that intelligence is Hamlet's tragic flaw.

Moving through later centuries, Erskine hammers home his point: "In Fielding or Scott, Thackeray or Dickens, the hero of the English novel is a well-meaning blunderer, who in the last chapter is temporarily rescued by the grace of God from the mess he has made of his life. Unless he also dies in the last chapter, he will probably need rescue again." Now Erskine is by no means saying that the English are stupid, but rather that "Anglo-Saxon culture" does not place intelligence very high on its list of virtues. "Be good, sweet maid," that culture seems to say, "and let who will be clever." Erskine's 1913 essay is located almost exactly halfway between the sinking of the *Titanic* and the outbreak of World War I. We can find much that links the two events. Lord Grey's famous comment about the onset of war could also be applied to the *Titanic*: "The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime." When the *Titanic* went down off the coast of Newfoundland, its lights blazing almost to the end, there would never again be such a ship, such technical and such social confidence, such magnificence and grandeur. It was as if the Belle Epoque itself, with all its glitter and promise, had gone down in that icy sea.

To the young men of the 1920s who had fought in the war and then written about it, Captain Smith, and especially Second Officer C. H. Lightoller, would seem the perfect types of the officers who had commanded them in the disasters of the Western Front, perfect examples of gentlemanliness, courage, loyalty, steadfastness—and confident stupidity.

VIEWED historically, the *Titanic*'s very appearance on the sea possesses several meanings. The rising powers, America and Germany, were engaged in a fierce rivalry to dominate trans-Atlantic commerce, in competition with the established maritime power of Great Britain. The *Titanic* sailed under the banner of the British White Star Line and was thought to represent the apogee of British pride, achievement, and imperial power. But White Star was owned by a shipping combine controlled by J. Pierpont Morgan. Morgan was so powerful that he single-handedly stopped the Panic of 1907 by shifting millions of dollars among threatened banks. J. P. Morgan, in effect, owned the *Titanic*, which you can well interpret as an example of the decline of Britain relative to the United States. (Morgan, as it happens, had booked luxurious accommodations on the *Titanic* for its doomed maiden voyage. He decided at the last minute to go to Baden-Baden instead.)

A prominent view is that the *Titanic* disaster represented technology that had outrun the abilities needed to control it, and certainly Captain Smith and Second Officer Lightoller did not understand their ship's characteristics. All interpretations, however, must confront the role played by chance. If the ice conditions had been normal for that route (which Captain Smith had often sailed); if the sea had been a bit rough, with waves lapping the base of the iceberg; if there had been moonlight; if the lookout had seen the iceberg seconds earlier; if he had not seen it at all, so that the *Titanic* had hit head-on instead of trying to turn (the first two compartments would have been crushed, along with everyone in them, but the ship would have floated); if the *Titanic* had carried enough lifeboats; if the *Californian*, which was less than ten miles distant and whose lookouts had seen the eight distress rockets, had come to the rescue in time—if any *one* of these things had happened, the whole story, and therefore its "meaning," would be very different.

AS it stands, that meaning has large social and historical components. On December 31, 1899, the *New York Times* devoted nearly four editorial columns to a summing up of the nineteenth century, listing an age of marvels: steam engines, railroads, telegraph lines, ocean liners, telephones, electric lights, the cash register, advances in medicine and sanitation. "We step upon the threshold of 1900, which leads to the new century," announced the editorial, "facing a still bright dawn of civilization." From the perspective of this great optimistic thrust, the *Titanic* represented a major statement about progress and power. It was a floating grand hotel, its architecture, sculpture, rugs, and furniture far beyond anything that had ever gone to sea—or, indeed, would ever go to sea again.

The world of the Edwardian rich is important to this story. The public followed without envy the comings and goings of this small group of international social celebrities—so rich, I suppose, that they were beyond envy. Captain Smith, at sixty, planned the *Titanic*'s maiden crossing to be the culmination of his long career. The Edwardian rich chose their ships according to who the captain was, and Smith was their favorite. He radiated experience and confidence. He was soft-spoken and considerate. On the last night, Captain Smith passed on the bad news to John Jacob Astor in a personal chat before the ordinary passengers were notified. Others of the elite also got the bad news in private. Not one betrayed the captain's confidence. Most of those so favored went down with the *Titanic* along with Smith. When it was known that the *Titanic* had gone down, the *New York American* devoted its lead story almost entirely to John Jacob Astor, mentioning only at the end that 1,800 others had been lost (the actual toll was about 1,500).

THE first person to see the iceberg was lookout Frederick Fleet, who had been peering into a dazzling starry night, the sea calm and dark and the temperature falling. It was 11:40 P.M. Remarkably enough, Mr. Fleet was startled to see the iceberg. The six ice warnings had been treated casually, the sixth of them remaining on a spike in the wireless office. It had come at 11:00 P.M. from the *Californian*. The fifth message had told the *Titanic* exactly where to expect the iceberg.

Smith had a great deal to reflect upon during the time it took the ship to sink. Why had the *Titanic* roared ahead at 22.5 knots given the ice warnings? The answer is that prestige attached to a fast crossing, and Smith had never encountered serious ice at this latitude. Six years earlier, when he captained the *Adriatic* on these routes, he said, "I cannot imagine any condition which would cause a ship to founder. I cannot conceive of any vital disaster happening to this vessel. Modern shipbuilding has gone beyond that." The words "cannot imagine" and "cannot conceive" represent his epitaph.

Smith knew that his 16 lifeboats and 4 collapsibles could hold only 1,178 people. There were 2,207 people aboard. Smith ordered the boats lowered, saying to Lightoller, "Put the women and children in and lower away." Mr. Lightoller took this order with an eerie literalness as meaning not "women and children first," but "women and children only." Thus, he lowered many boats partly empty, even less than half full, while holding back all men.

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It is astonishing from a late twentieth-century perspective that the men being sacrificed to Lightoller's stupidity went along with it so stoically. Not all did, of course. Bruce Ismay, a director of the White Star Line, jumped into a lifeboat at the last minute and survived, but not socially. He of all people was supposed to go down with his ship. He seems to have had a nervous breakdown on the rescue ship. He was entirely ostracized in London and died in rural seclusion.

There was plenty of comedy as well. First-class passenger Gordon Thayer saw a man stumble past him carrying a full bottle of Gordon's gin. He thought to himself that this was one man he would certainly never see again. In fact, he was the first person Thayer met on the rescue ship, the *Carpathia*.

It is astonishing that the men being sacrificed went along with it so stoically.

Another man, drunk and in a raccoon coat, floated for hours in the icy water and survived; apparently the coat acted as a sort of wet suit.

The ship's band was heroic too. The musicians assembled in the Grand Lounge and played on until the last moments. That their last tune was "Nearer My God to Thee" is not true, but there is dispute about just what the last tune was. Walter Lord has studied the various accounts and pronounced persuasively. It was a ragtime tune called "Song of Autumn."

A particular mystery surrounds Captain Stanley Lord of the nearby *Californian*. Concerned about ice, he had stopped less than ten miles from the spot where the *Titanic* went down. Two crewmen reported to him in the middle of the night that they had seen rockets from an unidentified ship, surely the eight distress rockets fired by the *Titanic*. Captain Lord wondered aloud whether they were "company rockets," mutual greetings from ships of the same line. No seaman could really have mistaken these rockets for greetings. Captain Lord went back to sleep, and he lives in infamy.

Much farther away, on the *Carpathia*, Captain Arthur Rostron had turned in for the night when the first distress signal was heard, almost by chance, by wireless operator Harold Cottam, who was on his way to bed. Cottam burst into Rostron's bedroom to blurt out that the *Titanic* was sinking. Rostron immediately did his duty, turning the *Carpathia* at full speed toward the site of the disaster, surging to cover the 58 miles, steering around the ice as it loomed in the dark. All those saved from the *Titanic* were saved by Rostron and the *Carpathia*.

I OBSERVED earlier that a large wave of optimism, based on technological, scientific, and—some thought—moral progress, had greeted the advent of the twentieth century. Many reflective spirits, however, did not share in this virtually unqualified optimism. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* in 1898 was full of dark apprehensions about the future of civilization. One of America's foremost historians, Henry Adams, deeply feared the new era and its—as he saw it—metastasizing technology. His major works constitute searches for metaphors of civilizational decay. Still, Adams did not hesitate to embrace the new technology when it suited him. He booked passage on the return voyage of the *Titanic*, scheduled to leave New York for Southampton on April 20, 1912. When the *Titanic* sank, Adams saw this, sardonically, as confirmation of his pessimistic theories.

It seems clear that the technologies of the *Titanic* had outpaced the skill, knowledge, and discipline of the men charged with operating them. Smith, Lightoller, and the rest were dealing with mechanical forces they did not fully understand. Today we face innumerable situations of the same or an even more intense kind. As Henry Adams foresaw with such dread, the increments of change are exponential, and, short of some global calamity, they undoubtedly will continue to be so. What is called for is high discipline and high intelligence to operate the ever-new technologies. Quite possibly we see a model of twenty-first-century man in Robert Ballard, who discovered the wreck of the *Titanic* in 1986. Born in 1942, he studied chemistry and geology, went to two graduate schools of oceanography, served both in Army Intelligence and in the Navy, and earned an PhD in marine geology and geophysics. His floating lab ship and underwater vehicles represent space-age technology. Not at all incidentally, his investigations are supported by huge grants from the U.S. Navy, which undoubtedly looks forward to future operations on the ocean floors. That Ballard and his technology re-entered the Grand Lounge of the *Titanic* and walked her decks by electronic controls is one of the most poignant moments in the history of modern culture, and perhaps a hopeful indication that the lessons of the *Titanic* will be heeded after all. □

The New Russia

RADEK SIKORSKI

DAVID Remnick received the Pulitzer Prize for *Lenin's Tomb*, his story of the collapse and fall of the Soviet Empire, and so I was wary of his second installment. What passes for prize-winning Western reporting on Russia is often such shallow drivel that one is instinctively skeptical. As far as I know, the Pulitzer that Walter Duranty received for his vignettes of happy peasants in Ukrainian *kolkhozes*, written in the midst of the Stalin-made genocidal famine in the 1930s, has never been withdrawn.

So it was with unexpected joy that I read this account of the titanic struggle to try to build a free society in Russia. Politically, Remnick seems equally at ease with evangelists of a new imperialism such as Aleksandr Prokhanov, and with Westernizers such as the former prime minister Yegor Gaidar. Remnick paints vivid little pen-portraits of men such as Colonel General Eduard Vorobyov, who resigned his commission rather than order his men, unprepared, into the maelstrom of Grozny; or Vladimir Gusinsky, the corrupt banker and media mogul who lives in fear of his life but has managed to do freedom a good turn by showing Russians the real face of the Chechen war.

Mr. Sikorski is NR*'s roving correspondent.*

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Unlike many reporters on the former Eastern Bloc, Remnick avoids the trap of economism. This attitude, post-Marxist in spirit, holds that everything —the fate of empires, societies, even religions—can basically be explained in terms of bread and butter. Sort of "It's the economy, stupid," writ large.

There are wonderful nuggets of information. Did you know, for example, that Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is widely believed to hold a personal stake in Gazprom, the company which controls one-third of the world's gas reserves and accounts for 5 per cent of Russia's GDP? This makes Chernomyrdin a dollar billionaire many times over. I laughed aloud when I read that the Thatcherite Yegor Gaidar is the son of the author of *Timur and His Team*, the notorious Soviet children's classic which I, like millions of others, was spoon-fed at school in Communist Poland. Timur was a cross between G.I. Joe and Robin Hood, the leader of a Communist version of a scouting troop, who performed feats of bravery and self-sacrifice on behalf of veteran revolutionaries. Like most things Soviet, the character was fanatical and silly, and he had become the butt of endless jokes by the time I reached high school.

Resurrection: The Struggle for a New Russia, by David Remnick (Random House, 398 pp., $25.95)

My favorite part of Mr. Remnick's book, however, is his thoughtful portrait of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and his struggles with both the Soviet system and the Western media. What emerges from the Politburo files is that the Soviet leadership spent an inordinate amount of time worrying about the lone writer's threat to their power. The chief advocate of expelling the Nobel Prize winner from the Soviet Union was the man whom the Western media once lauded as a whisky-swilling liberal, KGB chief Yuri Andropov. It was also on Andropov's orders that the KGB "helped to promote through its agents and contacts" material condemning Solzhenitsyn and his "class-based hatred of the Soviet power." Mission accomplished, Andropov reported that the material, "much of it insisting that Solzhenitsyn was an anti-Semite yearning for a return of the czars," had brought on a re-evaluation of his personality and had successfully created doubts about his distorted work.

Remnick could have gone further. Solzhenitsyn is the perfect illustration of the point that dividing the Russian political scene into reformers and reactionaries, the first worthy of Western support, the latter fit only for condemnation, is misleading. Solzhenitsyn is a moral conservative, critical of the swashbuckling capitalism that has allowed Russia's elite to rob their country. At the same time, he is a consistent advocate of withdrawal from empire. For too long, he says, Russian leaders have been roving the world offering unwanted solutions to other people's problems. What his country needs, he passionately believes, is vigorous internal development, investment in Russia's soil, industry, and people. But his language, steeped in outmoded concepts such as repentance and spiritual renewal, jars with Western bankers, diplomats, and journalists.

The latter prefer men such as Yuri Luzhkov, Moscow's flashy mayor, who promotes spectacular building projects, issues Eurobonds, and rides the populist bandwagon. Luzhkov has more in common with reformers of old, who used Western methods for expansionary purposes. Solzhenitsyn is suspicious of the West's excesses; Luzhkov is superficially more Westernized. But which attitude—Solzhenitsyn's repentance and renewal or Luzhkov's modernization and reassertion—is likely to make Russia a better neighbor?

Remnick is clearly a very able man, with a scholar's erudition, a reporter's energy, and a poet's compassion. He knows too much to have any illusions about Communism. Yet, he inserts snide remarks about those who dared to be right about the Soviet Union thirty years before him. Kissinger is a "Russophobe." Liberal intelligentsia's flirtation with Communism, on the other hand, is understandable, because Joe McCarthy and Jesse Helms are so "repellent." Remnick seems scared of breaking some intellectual commandment. It is becoming all right to tell the truth about the Soviet Union, but he feels obliged to denounce those who always told it. It is as if, circa 1950, someone could not acknowledge that Churchill was always right about Hitler because he disagreed with Churchill's views on feminism.

Remnick seems scared of breaking some intellectual commandment.

Remnick's conclusions are too optimistic. "An entirely new era has begun. Russia has entered the world, and everything, even freedom, even happiness, is now possible." "Russia is no longer an enemy or anything resembling one," he says, which is obviously true so far as it goes. But Russia's hysterical reaction to proposals for NATO enlargement suggests that the country's elite still sees itself as the West's potential adversary rather than its ally. Russia is at the nadir of its power right now, but when its economy finally makes a turnaround, as Remnick predicts will happen, we can expect such sentiments to flourish.

Nevertheless, *Resurrection* is a magnificent achievement, the best account of Russia's quest for normality I have read so far. Everyone interested in what the twenty-first century might portend in a country which made such a mess of the twentieth, should read Mr. Remnick's gripping report. □

Dragging Darwin In

MICHAEL J. BEHE

FOR a species that calls itself rational, much of our thinking depends on a few, not easily proven premises. To compound the problem, not all people share the same premises; religious believers speak of good and evil, Marxists of class warfare, Freudians of the ego, and so forth. Despite different starting points, however, we can sometimes agree on practical conclusions. In *The Origins of Virtue*, Matt Ridley defends economic and political ideas with which many readers of NATIONAL REVIEW will concur. But he does so from within the murky confines of Darwinism.

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Ridley's goal is to explain how much of what we think of as virtue could have arisen through natural selection, as the by-product of a struggle of selfish genes to replicate themselves. The idea of virtue as disguised self-interest is not new, he acknowledges. What is new is the gene-centered view of biology. Ridley is a talented writer who enlivens his books with fascinating stories of nature, but he fails to explain why the reader should step inside the charmed Darwinian circle.

His chief analogy is called the prisoner's dilemma. Suppose two partners in crime are apprehended, but the state needs a confession to prove its case. If both prisoners keep their mouths shut, they'll both be better off. If the prosecutor separately offers each a deal, however, neither wants to be the one left holding the bag. When modifications of the prisoner's dilemma are programmed into a computer and played out repeatedly, computer prisoners learn over time that it's best for each to keep quiet.

The Origins of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation, by Matt Ridley (Viking, 295 pp., $24.95)

Ridley issues a mild caveat ("To reduce the complexity of life to a silly game is the kind of thing that gets economists a bad name") but still concludes that cooperation turns out to be the best strategy for individuals pursuing their own interest.

Self-interested cooperation, he feels, can explain not only trade and the division of labor, but also emotions ("rage deters transgressors; guilt makes cheating painful for the cheat;" etc.). Although Ridley cites horrific examples, such as the eugenics movement, of attempts to draw political lessons from natural selection, he boldly comes out in favor of private property and limited government, all in the name of Darwinian principles rightly understood.

In a chapter called "Ecology as Religion," Ridley proves adept at puncturing Green myths, like that of the noble savage living in harmony with nature. "Coincident with the first certain arrival of people in North America, 11,500 years ago, 73 per cent of the large mammals quickly died out. Gone were giant bison, wild horse, short-faced bear, mammoth, mastodon, saber-toothed cat, giant ground sloth, and wild camel." Our noble ancestors ate them all. On the other hand, he shows how Maine lobstermen avoided overfishing for fifty years by dividing up the coastal waters into defined territories assigned to "harbor gangs"—without involving the government.

In passing he skewers a few environmental saints, including Al Gore. But as a Darwinian, Ridley has his own peculiar way of looking at the environment. "You could plausibly argue that grass is the master of the planet, because it has employed us as its slave. We plant it, in the form of wheat and rice, where once forests stood. We tend it and loyally fight its enemies." Right. And the automobile has employed us as its slave. We tend it, fight its enemies such as rust, and pave over grass to build its roads.

To a non-Darwinian, the oddest thing about Ridley's conclusions is that they don't require Darwinian evolution—just the ability to learn. Given self-interested, intelligent human beings, cooperation, trade, and the division of labor will develop over time as more and more people realize that such things are in their interest. A grumpy waiter need only observe that his cheerful co-workers are taking home more pay, and change his style. No natural selection is necessary. Notice that this behavior says nothing about where intelligence and the ability to learn came from. They might have come from Darwinian evolution, come from God, or been beamed into us from outer space.

Ridley's conclusions don't require Darwinian evolution.

As a good Darwinian Ridley surrenders even his mind to evolution: "Our minds have been built by selfish genes, but they have been built to be social, trustworthy, and cooperative." Yet once again a deterministic conclusion is unnecessary. Faced with a prisoner's dilemma, completely free, self-interested agents will in general make the same

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choices as automatons. But the result merely reflects restricted options, not the grand metaphysical claims Ridley implies.

Ridley marshals examples from nature to show that we are not unique in our cooperative behavior. Colonies of closely related ants and bees are cooperative; but so are some groups of unrelated primates and dolphins. Male chimpanzees hunt in groups, form war parties to raid other chimp bands, and give meat to females in exchange for special favors; male dolphins team up to force their attentions on the fair sex.

But what does all this mean? The conclusion is foregone: "We owe our success as a species to our social instincts; they have enabled us to reap undreamt benefits from the division of labor for our masters—the genes. They are responsible for the rapid expansion of our brains in the past two million years and thence for our inventiveness."

The evidence that natural selection built our brains, however, ranges from nonexistent to negative. Neither fossils of hominids with varying skull shapes nor present-day animals with behavior patterns vaguely similar to humans' say anything about what caused those patterns to occur. The Darwinian, no less than the Marxist or Freudian, imposes his theories on an ambiguous nature.

To affirm that humans are free, rational, moral agents, one need not deny that cooperation benefits individuals, that humans have instincts, that other animals have a degree of intelligence, or that we are descended in some manner from other species. And to defend free trade, private property, and limited government one need not invoke a dubious biological theory. □

All-American Girl?

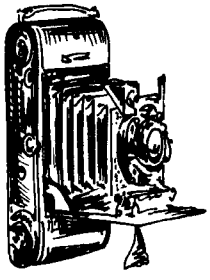
ELLEN WILSON FIELDING

YOU remember Naomi Wolf. She was the author of a much discussed article in *The New Republic* titled "Our Bodies, Our Souls." In it she coaxed her fellow pro-choicers to admit that abortion does kill a human being and is usually undertaken for reasons of convenience and therefore could be, may be, might be wrong. She got in some sharp jabs at the self-serving obfuscations of her allies on the Left, but ultimately her efforts petered out into suggestions on how to establish mourning rituals for abortion, while she continued to defend its legality.

Promiscuities: The Secret Struggle for Womanhood, by Naomi Wolf (Random House, 288 pp., $23)

That publishing event, and the extensive media reaction to it, happened more than a year ago. Since then Miss Wolf has completed a new project—a kind of autobiographical account of the sexual coming of age of the author and those she grew up with in those promiscuous, post-Pill pre-AIDS days following the sexual revolution. From this she intends to draw lessons about the role and meaning of women's sexuality, and the way in which girls should be inducted into womanhood today.

In her introduction, Miss Wolf tells us she thought of this collection of sexual anecdotes, recollections, and reflections as the story of "an ordinary American girlhood." This astonishing statement highlights one of the central flaws of her scheme of exploring how girls became women in liberated 1970s America, for her upbringing was spectacularly untypical.



Naomi Wolf grew up in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury, the daughter of a leftist professor and a mother whose graduate studies would lead her to examine, among other topics, the dynamics of the San Francisco lesbian community. *Promiscuities* is dedicated to Miss Wolf's grandmother, "who was a pioneer champion of sex education in a course she taught at the University of the Pacific for many years beginning in the 1950s."

Miss Wolf describes her childhood friends as coming from assorted Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic backgrounds, but there is no indication that any took religion seriously. When these women complain about being made to feel guilty for their sexual attitudes and desires, they are criticizing Society rather than parents or the local pastor or rabbi. Miss Wolf mentions that her parents were "ethnically Jewish," and she went to a Zionist summer camp, but the closest she comes to dealing with God's demands is in describing a rabbi-chaperoned trip to an Israeli kibbutz, where she is rebuked for hanging out with the Irish hired laborers (she becomes sexually involved with one of them, mostly, she thinks, as an act of rebellion).

Though her own parents remain married, her friends' families seem ahead even of the late-Sixties and Seventies divorce curve, with all the attendant collapse of parental involvement and moral energy. What Naomi Wolf's girlhood has to tell us about normal or average girlhoods remains unclear.

But there is a deeper problem, a confusion in Miss Wolf's mind that never resolves itself. On the one hand, she is candid about the parental lapses encouraged by the sexual revolution's preoccupation with self-fulfillment: "Though tolerance, joy, and honesty were real legacies of the freedom of that time, there is no doubt in the minds of my friends and myself that children and parenting fell in value as the exploration of the self and the senses gained in value." She can also see that girls and women were often used in the name of the sexual liberation that was supposed to place them on an equal footing with men. Yet Miss Wolf's focus remains obstinately on the question of whether social mores celebrate and enhance the satisfaction of female sexual desires.

She and the women she interviews talk endlessly about how the "sluts" were differentiated from the "good girls," and how awful it was that girls were made to feel worried or bad about being or appearing sexually advanced. Miss Wolf wistfully describes the temple prostitutes of ancient Babylonia, and the world of the Kama Sutra and of older Chinese erotica that paid tribute to the power of female sexuality and fertility.

But Miss Wolf should seriously consider whether the absorption of herself and her friends in the fulfilling of sexual desires is so very similar to the recognition of ancient societies that fertility and human sexuality are powerful in a sacred, cosmic sense. Those restrictive, patriarchal societies she so dislikes—the

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Romans with their Vestal Virgins, the Christians with their emphasis on chastity—at least had this in common with the fertility religions: they took sex seriously, as something important and powerful, which had enormous repercussions beyond individual itches or

Miss Wolf's understanding of the nature and purpose and scope of sexuality is depressingly thin.

self-absorbed fantasies. For all those multicultural references, Miss Wolf's understanding of the nature and purpose and scope of sexuality is in the end depressingly thin, incurably late-twentieth-century secular American. (She attributes the high divorce rate in part to sexually frustrated wives whose husbands pay insufficient attention to their need for orgasms.)

So it is not surprising that in her concluding chapters she tackles sex education in the same old bankrupt secular-liberal manner. Teens can be restrained from early sexual intercourse, with its attendant health dangers, by the Joycelyn Elders method of teaching them all the fun ways of achieving sexual bliss short of intercourse. That Miss Wolf can convince herself that this will postpone the onset of sexual intercourse in teenagers is a kind of tribute, I suppose, to the power of Haight-Ashbury and her grandmother and the romantic dreams they peddled.

In a move that seems borrowed straight from Robert Bly, Miss Wolf and some friends fashion their own female initiation rite, the modern counterpart of African and Indian tribal rituals, suggesting that pubescent girls go on retreats in the wilderness with trusted older women, who can "pass on to the younger everything they have learned about womanhood, and answer *every single question* the girls want to ask."

However she may imagine that hers was an "ordinary American girlhood," Naomi Wolf's coming of age in the heart of the counterculture was anything but. She hopes that something like her experience will become the

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norm for other, truly ordinary American girls, but we must cross our fingers and hope that her plans and prognostications never come to pass. □

FILM

Wars Near and Far

JOHN SIMON

IF the Academy Awards made any kind of sense—which, of course, they don't—the foreign-language Oscar would have gone not to the insipid *Kolya*, but to Russia's powerful ***Prisoner of the Mountains***. Based remotely on Tolstoy's *Prisoner of the Caucasus*, this is an updating to events in today's Chechnya. Many movies pretend to be pacifist in intent, but as long as they show wars with winners and losers, they are lying. In a true anti-war film such as this, even the winners are in some ways losers.

This is the story of two Russian soldiers captured by the Chechens and held for ransom by the town patriarch, Abdul-Murat, who would exchange them for his son, held by the Russians. The two are Sasha, a sergeant and cynical veteran, and Vanya, a recruit and naïve novice. Sasha begins with nothing but contempt for Vanya, refusing even to speak to him. But gradually the pair, often chained together, form human bonds as well. An exchange of prisoners fails, and the Chechens exert pressure on Abdul-Murat to kill his captives. He refuses, and urges them to write to their mothers to intercede. Meanwhile it is his 12-year-old but very mature daughter, Dina, who looks after the men, and soon Vanya is in love with her, even talking marriage. Up to a point, she reciprocates.

That much I can tell you. Let me add that hardly anything here is conventional and predictable. There is unsentimental toughness in story and dialogue, without a shadow of easy emotionalism. The sweetest and roughest moments are done with lean truthfulness. And always the action is surrounded by the cruelly beautiful Caucasus peaks, nature at its most austerely aloof, yet somehow epitomizing human courage and strength. Pavel Lebeshev's cinematography catches both nature and human habitats in their uncompromising starkness.

The director and co-scenarist, Sergei Bodrov, cast one of Russia's most popular actors, Oleg Menshikov, as Sasha, and his own son, Sergei Jr., as Vanya. Both are perfect: Menshikov with the easeful superiority of total self-confidence, Bodrov with youthful faith in a caring universe. Their relationship and their interaction with Dina evolve with matching insight and restraint. The Muslim girl Susanna Mukhratyeva, discovered in a local school in Dagestan, is immensely moving in her naturalness, simplicity, and understatement.

The script by Bodrov Sr., Boris Giller, and Arif Aliev—with Aliev contributing a discreet surreal element that works admirably—is an exemplar of clean yet detailed storytelling. It sticks to essentials, but without stinting on the pungently idiosyncratic. And nothing, nothing is ever underlined.

■ Greg Mottola's ***The Daytrippers*** is youthfully freewheeling and often illogical, but with some clever dialogue and comic situations and, here and there, surprisingly affecting moments.

Eliza d'Amico, a young Long Island housewife, finds what looks like a mash note in the pocket of her husband, Louis, off as usual on his job in a Manhattan publishing house. The note disturbs no less Eliza's busybody of a mother, Rita, who gets the entire family to head for the city to investigate. This includes father Jim, the silent, long-suffering type; younger sister Jo, spoiled and sharp-tongued; and Jo's live-in boyfriend, Carl, a construction worker writing a kafkaesque novel about a man with a dog's head. They all set out in the family station wagon to find out whether the note, signed by a certain Sandy, was even meant for Louis: after all, strange things happen in publishing.

The adventures of this sleuthing quintet in Manhattan are partly absurd, partly amusing, and only partly believable. Any number of characters streak across the canvas: some of them naïve outsiders, many of them publishing types of varying degrees of wit, wisdom, and wickedness. Rita, a pain in the butt, is unfortunately played by Anne Meara, an expert at exaggeration. Compared to this Rita, Medea seems like Whistler's Mother. Jo, though cynical, also has an overstock of unfulfilled cravings—Carl is a bit of a nerd—which makes her throw herself at Eddie, a smooth young novelist with whom she flirts at a publication party that evening. Parker Posey and Campbell Scott play the incipient lovers to the hilt.

Very fine, too, is Pat McNamara as the hapless Jim, saddled with his disturbed and unruly passengers—especially Rita, the back-seat driver from hell—but trying stoically to cope. Liev Schreiber, an actor I have never liked, is persuasive and even winning as the dopily endearing Carl—the only one who dotes on Rita, as she does on him—turning eventually into a quasi-tragic figure when he uncovers Jo's betrayal. The scene is genuinely touching. Conversely, the publishing world emerges as often hilarious in its caricatural but compelling eccentricity.

A typically comical scene has the frilly, fluttery author at the publication party make her ludicrous speech while Carl is awkwardly caught right behind her, trying simultaneously to smile with sophisticated complicity and send out mute signals for help. In another, funny yet moving, scene, Eliza confronts Louis at a later party, given by Sandy, where a major surprise occurs. Here the rending and the ridiculous perfectly intertwine, thanks also to fine playing by Hope Davis and Stanley Tucci. Still, the facile ending feels tacked on, and leaves us hanging over a not inconsiderable abyss. The failures of independent films differ from those of major-studio ones, but can be just as disturbing in the wrong way.

■ The fine Australian director Bruce Beresford has written and directed a decent movie in ***Paradise Road***, only to be done in by his very decency. He began by researching the stories of women—Australian, British, Dutch, including some nuns—who spent years as Japanese war prisoners on Sumatra. Their camp lives were awful: hunger, disease,

Mr. Simon is NR's film critic.

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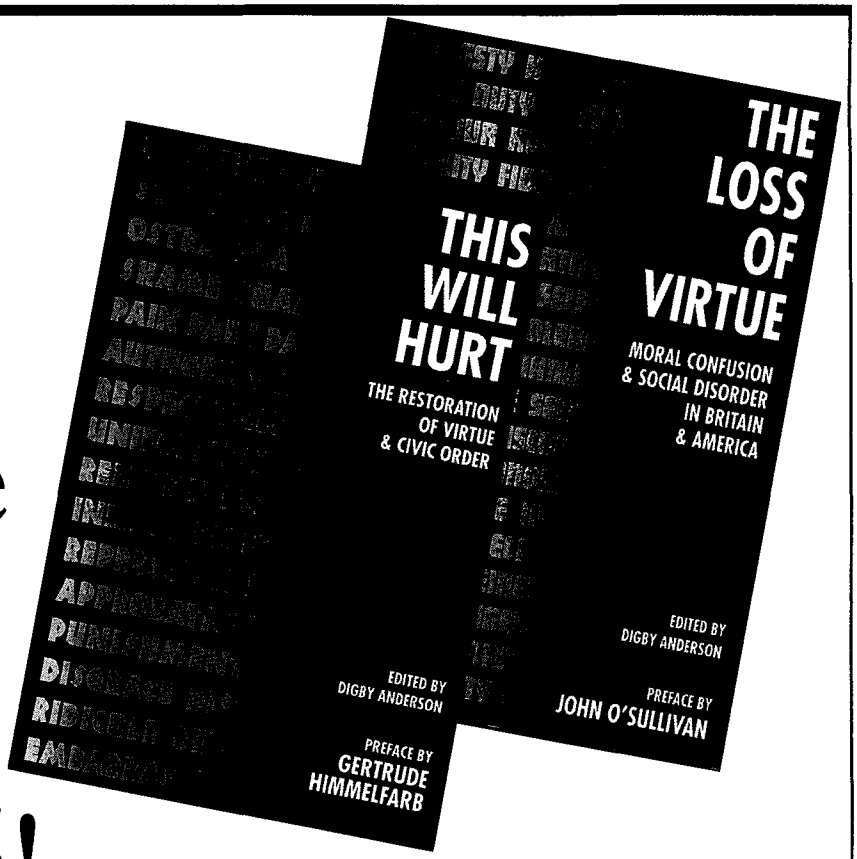
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MORAL CONFUSION & SOCIAL DISORDER IN BRITAIN & AMERICA
EDITED BY DIGBY ANDERSON
PREFACE BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN
THIS WILL HURT
THE RESTORATION OF VIRTUE & CIVIC ORDER
EDITED BY DIGBY ANDERSON
PREFACE BY GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

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rats, cockroaches, bedbugs, and the smell of latrines. Some few became their captors' concubines, exchanging physical ease for spiritual hardship.

As a lover of classical music, Beresford was especially interested in what that music did for these women. As one of them wrote: "For three and a half years all of us lived packed together. . . . We never had enough to eat or medicines to treat rampant malaria, dysentery, and beriberi." And they had no news of their families or of the progress of the war. But two valiant souls, Margaret Dryburgh, a missionary and musician, and Norah Chambers, an engineer's wife, hit upon a means to preserve sanity and dignity.

They copied out from memory and arranged for voices classical music they knew: Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Dvorak, Tchaikovsky. Rehearsing secretly, they prepared their first all-vocal concert, eventually enrapturing even their captors. Beresford's love for this music and its singers is such that he amassed more and more stories from more survivors than a mere film could accommodate. Though both the eve of the fall of Singapore and the Japanese air attack on the ship carrying most of the women are superbly rendered, the prison scenes end up too scattered, too diffuse. Some of them are terrifying, some tender and moving, but they involve so many different people as to make some of them shadows or, worse, clichés.

Beresford's love for this music and its singers is such that he amassed more stories than a mere film could accommodate.

As the Norah Chambers character, Glenn Close oozes her usual smugness; as the missionary, Pauline Collins is splendid. Others do what they can, except for Frances McDormand, who hams grossly. Peter James's camera and Ross Edwards's original music contribute handsomely, and the singing is inspired. If only Beresford had, less decently and democratically, concentrated on fewer women. □

THEATER

Down with the Ship

JOHN BLOOM

NEW York has the most sophisticated street beggars in the world, so I guess it's not too strange that when I ventured out onto 46th Street during the intermission of *Titanic* a guy with a white paper cup and a predatory grin sidled up to me and said, "Don't worry, the second half is much better." He didn't have quite the style of the black panhandlers on 23rd Street who bow and scrape outside a synagogue, wearing yarmulkes and opening the heavy doors for elderly ladies, but he had obviously done his homework. The run was barely under way and there was already a street buzz: stick it out until the second act. Wonderful things happen there. In the great tradition of sentimental opera, doomed people sing while dying. Middle-class matrons go home swollen-eyed and satisfied. Broadway breathes easier, because that dying but beloved dinosaur called the musical lives on in its carefully constructed cage, like the giant pandas quarantined in the National Zoo.

The truth is that *Titanic* is not terrible, but it's not terribly anything. Dreadfully costumed ocean-going stereotypes spend the first 15 minutes singing about how big the ship is, craning their necks up toward the ceiling of the Lunt–Fontanne Theatre like the rubbernecking German tourists just outside in Times Square, and then we get another 15 of snappy patter about how the ship is going too fast for a maiden voyage, so that the evil ship owner can set a new speed record. (All together now: Ooooooooooo.) All the time, we're eavesdropping on three rather dull parties—first class (millionaires with waxed mustaches and cigars), second class (social-climbing Midwesterners), and steerage (good-hearted immigrants who sing about America's streets being paved with gold). As the elderly captain is pressured to increase his speed, ominous messages arrive from other ships, reporting large icebergs at various locations. Yet the captain chooses "the northern route," to make better time. All together now: Aaaaaaaaahhhh.

Mr. Bloom is NR*'s theater critic.*

What playwright Peter Stone has done here, amazingly enough, is to write a musical about the ship itself.

Broadway breathes easier, because that dying but beloved dinosaur called the musical lives on in its carefully constructed cage.

The only fully realized character is the ship's designer, Thomas Andrews (Michael Cerveris), who discovers his fatal engineering mistake as the ship is tilting at a 45-degree angle and tossing furniture into the wings, simultaneously showing off an ingenious piece of stage machinery, Cerveris's beautiful lyric baritone, and the moving Eleven O'Clock Song, "Mr. Andrews's Vision," as penned by veteran composer/lyricist Maury Yeston. Cerveris, well known to Broadway audiences as the star of *Tommy*, does that doomed-artist thing, carrying his guilt to his watery grave, and the audience gladly goes down with the ship. Most of the other emotional moments are schmaltzy even by the standards of Broadway musicals. Ida Straus, wife of Macy's owner Isidor Straus, refuses to get into a lifeboat with the other women and children because "I've been with my husband 47 years and I'm not leaving him now." It's a fine moment, until a steward wheels a champagne cooler onto the deck, giving Isidor the chance to toast his wife, roll

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his champagne glass up in a napkin, and break the glass, *Fiddler on the Roof*–style. With this kind of bathos, who needs a bathysphere?

Yet it's just the kind of Generic Musical scene that could make *Titanic* a commercial hit, a play you can take Grandma to because it doesn't have any bad words or lewd dancing (in fact, it hardly has any dancing at all), and it pretty much reinforces every fairy-tale idea about the sophisticated worldliness of the Astors and Vanderbilts that has haunted the popular culture at least since *The Thin Man*. (One weird exception is the portrayal of Benjamin Guggenheim, a millionaire who travels with his mistress, who resembles a six-foot Nubian princess and has the odd name of "Mme Aubert." I wasn't sure whether this was a particularly hideous example of politically correct casting or a lame attempt to suggest a little kinkiness among the upper classes, but every time she appears on stage, audience members whisper to one another, "Did they explain why Guggenheim is with a black woman with a French name?" No, they didn't.)

Titanic, the musical, sounds like something invented by a cartoonist for *The New Yorker*, but the music is adequate, the spectacle is adequate (not once but twice was there applause for the sets), and the conclusion is strong enough to make everyone forget the first hour and 15 minutes. Unfortunately, if we didn't know these people were going to die miserably sometime before 10:45, we wouldn't be able to watch them at all. I won't even mention the working-class-Irish love-story subplot, complete with the scene in which the earthy, spunky girl asks her man to marry her, and he gives in because she's so earthy and spunky. *Titanic* tries to be tragic, but not so tragic as to disturb the digesting finger sandwiches of the matinee ladies. As such it's a perfect example of what the Broadway musical has become—a polite entertainment, a masque, as devoid of real emotion as a Michael Bolton video. I'll give you 8 to 5 it runs forever. □

DELECTATIONS

Cooking Children, Part II

DIGBY ANDERSON

ADULTS have a general responsibility to pass on their culture to the next generation, and that includes how to cook and eat well. If they don't, the culture will be finished, as is happening both here and in Britain. Parents have a particular obligation, but godparents and others should stand in when parents neglect it—as most do.

How do you teach a child to cook and eat well? Watch the child eat over an extended period. Make notes. Explain carefully what he is doing wrong and why: how he should not mix jelly with eggs and fried potatoes, why asparagus is valued more highly than cabbage, why there is an order to courses, why civilized people eat meat rare, the silliness and ingratitude of refusing "strange" foods. . . . Take him out to watch other people eat in restaurants or their homes. Quiz him to make sure he has acquired the proper admiration for refined eaters and the appropriate contempt for others.

He must then learn where the raw materials come from. There will be trips to farms, friendships with farmers who explain at what age animals are killed and why, how to tell the age of a sheep (by the number of its teeth), or a rabbit (by its jaw bone), or a pheasant (by its spurs). This also presents the opportunity for something crucial to a good cook and eater—the annihilation of sentimentality. All children, by age ten, should have killed at least rabbits (chop the back of the neck), chickens (wring the neck), and ducks (cut the head off). Other anti-sentimental exercises include handling slimy things such as eels and plunging their little hands up the bottoms of fowls to pull out the entrails.

Adults have a general responsibility to pass on their culture.

The great English cook Jane Grigson originally supposed good food was created by good cooking. She later understood that it depended on good shopping. The child must learn how to distinguish good from bad, what a good piece of beef looks like, how to test fish for freshness, what to look for in tomatoes depending on their use. Price is crucial too. The child must be introduced to the tradesmen and must listen, learn, and make friends with them. They are far more suitable companions and models than children his own age.

The bright child will at some point ask to cook a dish. He should on no account be allowed to. He still has to learn preparatory skills like sharpening knives, which most adults can't do, and how food is stored and why. Then he will learn basic routines. He will get up a little earlier in the mornings and make bread dough, baking the bread on his return from school. The same for the marinating of meats, the soaking of dried beans, the scaling of fish, the chopping of vegetables. He will learn to test temperatures of fats, how to keep stocks hot enough to do the work but not boiling over. He will learn to make mayonnaise and hollandaise, roux and reductions. He will do these tasks until he is wailing with tedium. The object is to make the skills not only instinctive and fast but integrated into the little blighter's life.

The actual cooking we can omit here. That, if anything, is what most adults know, and it's in the books. But the child must know how to plan menus. Good cooking is done over a week. Shopping is done every day, but meals should run on from one to another, last night's stew being used to make the ragu for tomorrow's pasta, today's fish bones and heads being turned into tomorrow's fish soup.

Last, the child will learn to budget. He must be given his own money to buy food, and be required to keep accounts. If he has produced good meals economically, he might be rewarded with some of the "saved" money. If not, he should be beaten. Please don't whine that children won't take this regime. My experience is that they will and enjoy it. It's the adults who are too idle, ignorant, or sentimental to impose it. □

Mr. Anderson is the editor of Gentility Recalled: Mere Manners and the Making of Social Order *(Acton Institute).*

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FISHER

(Continued from page 47)

undertaken by Russia or the United States during the Cold War, China fired ten nuclear-capable DF-15 missiles near Taiwan to try to intimidate the island.

Provided that China is able to sustain its access to foreign military technology, by the end of the next decade China's air force may be capable of long-range precision strikes and distant air-superiority missions under AWACS control. And if that is not enough, PLA air operations could be opened by highly accurate long-range ballistic-missile and cruise-missile strikes against radar facilities, anti-aircraft defenses, and ships in ports. This capability does not enable a country to occupy territory or control sea lanes. But in a surprise-attack scenario, China could possibly cripple U.S. air and naval forces in Asia and potentially overwhelm regional navies and air forces. And China may at least be able to deny control of sea lanes to U.S. naval forces, which might scare away international shipping critical to the survival of places like Taiwan.

Furthermore, the security interests of those seeking to arm China are by no means assured. A simmering desire for independence on the part of certain provinces in the Russian Far East, combined with long-term instability in European Russia, could tempt Peking to "help" a favored faction re-establish order. A powerful enough PLA combined with a history of payoffs to the Russian ruling elite could sufficiently undermine Moscow's resolve to oppose China. (Et tu, Washington?)

In the Middle East, new Chinese weapons based in part on Israeli technology may already be going to Iran. At Zhuhai, China revealed that it is now the fourth country, after Russia, Israel, and South Africa, to produce a helmet-sighted air-to-air missile. The helmet sight is a copy of the Russian model, but the missile it will guide is derived from the Israeli Python 3. This system will equip China's new F-8II M fighters, which reportedly will be part of a new $4.5-billion Iranian purchase of Chinese weapons. Iranian pilots could become competent with helmet-sighted missiles well before U.S. pilots get theirs in 2003 or 2004—if they are lucky. This will only better prepare Iran's pilots for the day they receive their Lavi-derived J-10 fighters.

All this should alarm responsible officials in Moscow, Jerusalem, and capitals across Europe, but there is no evidence that this is happening. Even more astounding is the lack of audible concern from the Clinton Administration. There are occasional reports of the Administration privately talking to Israel regarding its arms sales to China, but there is little evidence that Israel does anything more than offer a polite hearing. The U.S. should be applying both public and private pressure on Russia, Israel, Britain, and France to stop their arms sales that will destabilize Asia. Israel, Britain, and France, in particular, should be told that Americans may be less willing to subsidize their security by allowing them access to very expensive U.S. weapons if they build a threat to U.S. interests in Asia.

But such backbone on the eve of presidential summitry with China should not be expected. On January 10, when asked whether the U.S. was concerned over Russia's sale of missile-armed destroyers to China, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns refused to oppose the sale, noting that "there is nothing we can see that contravenes international law or our own." So a decade hence, when our sailors and airmen may be facing menacing new Chinese weapons, we should simply call the lawyers. In the race to arm China, instead of a referee waving the red flag, the Clinton Administration is just a bemused spectator. □

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Mourn the Peruvian Terrorists?

NEW YORK, APRIL 25

There is a feeling of recrimination out there against President Fujimori. In chiaroscuro, what he accomplished in rescuing the hostages has to rank with the Entebbe rescue and the escape of the Prisoner of Zenda. Why is it that the mincing reservations get so much play?

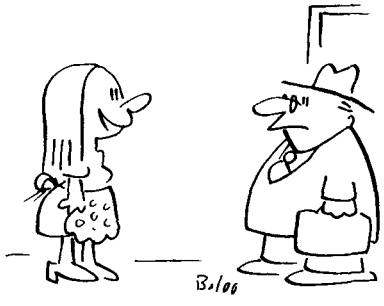
The perspective was slanted on one broadcast channel at the outset. The announcer went through the historical motions: What was it that happened in December? 1) The Túpac Amaru guerrillas in control of the Japanese embassy gave out the word that unless their four hundred fellow terrorists were released from prison within 24 hours, the hostages would be executed. 2) President Fujimori said he would not bargain with the terrorists. "When the deadline came," the announcer said, "neither side made any concessions." But of course the terrorists did indeed make a concession: the hostages were not executed.

We have stumbled across an important semantic point. The hostages were being held by "rebels," many news sources said. But the gentry who penetrated the embassy are more properly designated as terrorists. Their band has committed, for 13 years, random acts of violence. Because these people have in mind the replacement of the government does not qualify them as rebels in any formal sense. They are certainly qualified as terrorists in that they have engaged in torture and assassination. They are in the tradition of Kenya's Mau Mau, the Philippines' Huks. They could be thought of as members of the Resistance, if one could get away with saying that what they did against the Peruvians was no different from what the French Resistance did against the Nazis and the French accommodationists. But to compare the lesser traits in common, ignoring the greater traits not in common, is logically misleading: the French Resistance were, however randomly, joined in the enterprise of restoring legitimate democratic government. The Túpac Amaru are now trying to overthrow a government that received two-thirds of the vote in the last election.

The carpers over the weekend pronounced their distress over the decision by Fujimori to bury the terrorists in scattered unmarked graves. This is deplored here and there as unfeeling. It is certainly that: Fujimori feels no bereavement over the fourteen dead men and women who terrorized over eighty men and women for over one hundred days, risking their lives and costing the lives of two of the rescuing militiamen. But Fujimori's act was more merely than posthumous disgrace: he sought to avoid a locus of vindictive indignation. In denying what would have run the danger of surviving as an inspiriting shrine, Fujimori was in the tradition of the Bolivian generals who in 1967 refused to embalm the body of Che Guevara and send him to be a cadaver of inspiration to his benighted followers, in La Paz or back in Buenos Aires or in Havana.

The British went 19 years before allowing the remains of Napoleon to be returned to France, where, they feared, Bonapartism might be refueled. The Allies, after Hitler died, did what they could to eliminate his bunker. And, after a generation, went so far as to destroy even the traces of it that remained underground. They did not want to be responsible for preserving something that might prove a source of inspiration to the obstinately depraved.

There is talk that two of the terrorists sought to surrender but were killed. Abstractly, this complaint is legitimate. But it is made mostly by those who do not contemplate the metabolism of a firefight. The pressures in a commando raid often do not permit even the least humane protocols. A commando confronting one of fourteen terrorists armed with machine guns, the rest of whom, for all the commando knows, are hidden behind a stairway or inside a closet, either shoots or else becomes an armed guard: useless to his companions in their joint operation, and a target for the lurking terrorists. It requires a comfortable removal from the scene, preferably to a quiet classroom, to declaim against the commando engaged in a rescue mission who shoots anyone in sight identified as the enemy.



"Dinner will be ready in an hour—why don't you relax by mowing the lawn?"

One broadcaster, with a perfectly straight face, said that to the astonishment of "everybody," Fujimori's popularity rating had shot up 30 per cent. But, he sighed mournfully, now that this crisis was over, perhaps Mr. Fujimori could give more attention to the problems of the poor. The poor in Peru have many problems, but not the least of these is the Túpac Amaru, about whom it is said with some relief that there are fourteen fewer of them around, thanks to Fujimori. □

Heston to the Rescue

NEW YORK, MAY 6

The quarrel within the National Rifle Association is of zero interest to the public at large if it is nothing more than a quarrel between Mr. Wayne LaPierre and Mr. Challenger for control of the huge and effective lobby. That it is something more than factional strife is suggested by board member/actress Susan Howard, who, in the report by Katharine Seelye of the *New York Times*, complained that the Rifle Association was now "held in such low esteem that members were practically spat upon by strangers."

The low esteem of the NRA is said to trace substantially to the Oklahoma bombing. Since what happened in Oklahoma City hasn't anything to do with firefights in which pistols or rifles were used, it isn't clear why the NRA is held to blame. One assumes that a common property—guns emit violence, bombs emit violence—has something to do with it. Still, the NRA is in trouble, and the election of Charlton Heston as first vice president is a very good move. Mr. Mike Beko of Ohio opposed the election of Mr. Heston on the grounds that it is nothing more than a venture in image-making designed to reingratiate the lobby with Republicans in Washington who have done nothing for the gun lobby, neglecting even to overturn the ban on assault weapons or to "get the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms back in their cages."

Well, if Mr. Heston is going to emerge as a spokesman for the NRA he has a job on his hands. Those of us who have experienced Mr. Heston at close quarters know him to be a conservative who is given to reflection on the right and wrong of public policies. His solomonic tones and august presence are much esteemed, and to the

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charge over the weekend that in submitting his name for election he was engaging in nothing more than a bid to elevate his influence, he replied modestly that both the Democratic and the Republican Parties in California have over the years sought him as a candidate for public office. He does not need any more public recognition than what he has already earned as Moses, Ben Hur, and Michelangelo.

What the NRA needs, of course, is to climb back from the fanatical perch on which it now dangles in consequence of its adherence to ACLU-type reasoning. The lawyers call the mode: slippery-slope. It is the argument that if you give one inch, they will take one mile.

As a philosophical postulate, it is appealing. The trouble is, it is ungrounded in reality. The late Sidney Hook, a brilliant philosopher and analyst, wrote a book called *The Paradoxes of Freedom*, in which he made a devastating case against Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black. Mr. Black was an absolutist on the First Amendment. It tells us that Congress "shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech"—therefore, no libel or slander law is constitutional.

Mr. Hook pointed out that Congress has to navigate among conflicting constitutional liberties, if they are taken to absolute lengths. I have a Sixth Amendment right to "compulsory process for obtaining witnesses" in my favor, you have a Fifth Amendment right to decline to be a witness against yourself. The First Amendment gives us the freedom to exercise our religion and the guarantee against a state religion: is it okay to hang the Ten Commandments on the public-school wall?

Under slippery-slope, if a society bans the sale of de Sade, it will end up banning the sale of *Ulysses*. The NRA takes the position that the Second Amendment's right of the people to "keep and bear arms" is subject to slippery-slope—and therefore denying a citizen the right to buy an "assault weapon" jeopardizes his right to own a rifle.

The definition of the right to bear arms is a flexible thing. During the Thirties, the Supreme Court upheld a ban against sawed-off shotguns, on the grounds that they were of no practical value except to bank robbers and Mafia executioners. Along came the Second World War, which revealed that sawed-off shotguns were also useful in trench warfare—definitions change, even as the law of libel was changed by *New York Times* v. *Sullivan*, which requires a plaintiff to prove "actual" malice before proceeding against a public figure.

The NRA's absolutism begs the influence of such as Mr. Heston to qualify it. We cherish the right to own a weapon of self-defense, and some even pause over the restrictions against handguns in most large cities. But the argument is empirical, not philosophical; and Charlton Heston, who played Captain Queeg in *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*, knows about the constant struggle between philosophical affirmations (the captain is in charge of the ship) and real-life situations (when mutiny beckons). □

Life Without Sesame Street?

NEW YORK, MAY 2

On the whole business of a continuing subsidy to the Public Broadcasting Service, concentrated thought brings us to consider two questions. The first is the general question, Do you believe federal money should go to PBS (about $250 million per year)? The second, If federal money did not go to PBS, would the viewer probably be able to view elsewhere that which he now views on PBS?

George Will, an early assailant of continuing subsidies, made a fundamental point in his two columns in 1992 on the subject. It was that in 1967, when PBS first took off, the TV viewer had the alternative of looking at ABC, CBS, or NBC. A generation ago that seemed profligate fare—for a period after the war, the English viewer had only BBC. But of course now we have dozens, prospectively hundreds of channels. And these aren't simply channels giving us more soaps. They include such as CNN, C-SPAN, Bravo, A&E, Discovery, and (I'm told) a children's channel. Question: Could a viewer pluck out of all these a mosaic that in effect provided him with everything he now gets from PBS?

Mr. Henry Cauthen, the grand figure in Southern broadcasting and former chairman of the the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, ardently disputes any such claim and offers arguments in behalf of the system to which he has devoted his energies for thirty years. It is widely known that only 16 per cent of the expenses of public stations comes from federal subsidy. Yes, Mr. Cauthen admits, but a full 50 per cent of the cost of the smaller local stations is covered by government money, and there is no way you can deprive an enterprise of 50 per cent of its money and hope to have it survive.

At this point the serious inquirer will wish to consult a remarkable book by Laurence Jarvik. He is a young Fellow of the Capital Research Center in Washington and published this year *PBS: Behind the Screen*. It is a book that examines public broadcasting from several perspectives—financial, organizational, educational, and ideological. Mr. Jarvik has a PhD from the University of California at Los Angeles, but that should not scare off the reader. His book is wonderfully well written, the narrative engrossing, the bite hard but not mean. The book is introduced by Van Gordon Sauter, former president of CBS News, notwithstanding that the book is critical of PBS and that most captains of the commercial networks are fiery champions of public broadcasting.

Mr. Jarvik tells us that there isn't all that much for the little station to do, given that its programming is handed it by the system's national program service. On this point he quotes David Townshend of KVIE, Sacramento, who in a letter to the *New York Times* generalized, "for all practical purposes" the local station is "just a very big satellite dish sitting on top of a building that does fundraising." Existing arrangements, Jarvik argues, are wasteful and accomplish very little. On this point there is apparent agreement from sources of disparate ideological inclination. The Twentieth Century Fund argues for an end to all federal aid to local PBS stations, on the grounds that they should be supported by the communities they serve. Hodding Carter, former publisher and State Department spokesman under President Carter, once said of the existing system, "It's the perfect American screwed-up system, combining the worst of both worlds—bureaucratic Washington and opportunistic capitalism." Those who think they can readily understand the public-television structure should be warned by Larry Grossman, who served as president of PBS. "[It is] a system no one in the outside world understands or can penetrate. It is a system that ensures that public television will remain mired in second-class status with a top-heavy, expensive, and stifling bureaucracy."

But all of the above does not answer the question: What would we do without it? A world without *MacNeil–Lehrer* would be a world without the sun, moon, or stars. But would such a world threaten?

All of this is said inquisitively. It is the proper burden of government to maintain the monuments of a society, and this means not only the Lincoln Memorial, but the prothonotary warbler and the sound of Yo Yo Ma. It is required, I suppose, that I acknowledge PBS's sponsorship of my own program, *Firing Line*, for 26 years (though they get it free). And it is reassuring to meditate on Mr. Jarvik's observation that although in 1995 Congress reduced PBS's subsidy, net revenues increased—from private donations. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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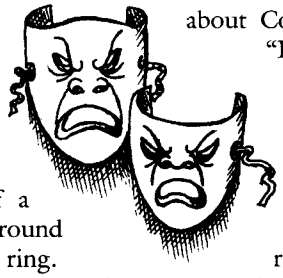
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

THE attempted restoration of the Republic of Texas is looking better and better since the President's Summit gathered in Philadelphia to finish off the Liberty Bell. Another country would come in handy now that Bill Clinton has redefined citizenship to include compulsory volunteerism.

Billed as "bi-partisan," the summit attracted as sorry a band of Grand Old Compassioneers as ever was seen. There was George Bush, the reason why of the GOP Light Brigade, doing his impersonation of a grasshopper trying to be a regular guy. There was Barbara Bush, all wifed-out and breathing on cue; there was Gerald Ford, looking happy as only the seriously dumb can; and there was simpering Nancy Reagan, securing her husband's Place in History with the vacuity of a teenager wrapping thread around her boyfriend's oversized class ring.



A Lott was missing, but the enervated little tableau serves well enough as a symbol of what happens when the Right abandons its native sternness and tries to operate on the oxymoronic principle of "conservatism with a heart."

Both the summit itself and the press coverage gave off that quality of upbeat malice that marks all socialist dictatorships, a "Be my brother or else" tone that no one but Jimmy Carter could miss. Gone were the customary euphemisms as Colin Powell rejoiced, "It's good to have an army again," and *Newsweek* pondered how to "prod" and "embarrass" us into mentoring the Great At-Risk and Felix Ungering their littered streets.

The most riveting semantic switch came at the end of *Newsweek*'s story when it was asked "whether the American people can be inspired to hold themselves accountable for the future of their children." The longstanding avuncular reference to "our children" has now been replaced by "their children," a rhetorical first conveying the message that this time they really are ours.

How can I help? According to Powell, "You gotta reach out to people who don't look like you, don't talk like you." How about don't write like you? Mary McGrory, who thinks government workers should be *ordered* to tutor in the D.C. public schools, visited an elementary school and watched "our little strugglers" being mentored by volunteers from an elite law firm, who were "laughing and talking and throwing them up in the air." Unfortunately they caught them.

The summit had much to say about Corporate America (Powell: "I'd like to give them a guilt trip") and their duty to practice *noblesse oblige*, now known as "giving something back to the community." The philanthropy of the old robber barons is out now. They filled America with libraries, museums, and concert halls, but they let us alone and we let them alone, and that won't do at all.

Socialist levelers use charity to force big business to give at the orifice. If the robber barons had really cared they would have granted their geologists paid "release time" and bused them to the slums to fiddle while the oil fields burned, and kept a few blast furnaces idle to use as "safe havens" for the Great At-Risk, as Kmart has offered to do with 2,150 stores. Never mind that most of their customers moved to the suburbs to get away from these same swarms of budding superpredators and may now decide to avoid Kmart. Stockholders be damned; turning stores into indoor street corners is a "challenge" that must be met.

The real value of volunteerism to liberals was expressed in *Newsweek*'s gloating observation: "It's put-up-or-shut-up time for those who have urged the private sector to take a greater role." Except for a few moist sentimentalists like Mary McGrory, liberals want volunteerism to fail and take conservatism down with it so they can proceed unimpeded with their agenda for Big Socialism.

THEY could not have picked a better petard to hoist us on. The failure lurking in mass volunteerism is not the ordinary failure of Women Strike for Peace or Take Your Daughter to Work Day. It's more along the lines of the Lost Colony or the Flight to Varennes.

Consider the possibilities:

A volunteer will be murdered, giving "release time" new meaning.

Pedophiles will flock to serve, giving "at-risk" new meaning.

The retail safe-havens scheme will produce a phantom of the opera. What was that tinkling sound coming from Electrical Fixtures? Why are the curtains swaying in Housewares? Someone is in here . . .

Mentors who are thinking of taking their charges home should rent *The Man Who Came to Dinner* and *Crawlspace* at their local video stores, and drop by the library to look up Truman Capote's first published short story, "Miriam," about a kindly benefactress and a little house guest who gives "roots" new meaning.

Companies forced to hire welfare mothers will be forced to give them paid release time so they can be forced to volunteer to read to the children of mothers still on welfare, who in turn will be forced to volunteer to read to the children that the ex–welfare mothers left untended when they were forced into the labor market.

Fiery adoption controversies will erupt as volunteers get attached to children. If thwarted, some unstable mentors will turn to kidnapping, giving "little strugglers" new meaning.

Philadelphia's "48-hour graffiti-free zone" pledge that commits volunteers to remove new defacements in two days will turn out to be the greatest artistic inspiration since sunsets. As volunteers with turpentine labor to stay one step ahead of kids with spray cans, whole neighborhoods explode the moment someone lights a crack pipe and a $1.2 trillion class-action suit is brought against Glidden and Dutch Boy.

By Election 2000, "Bring back Big Government!" bumper stickers are everywhere. The Democrats win 435–0 and conservatives console ourselves with the thought that at least we can't paint ourselves into another corner because there is no paint. □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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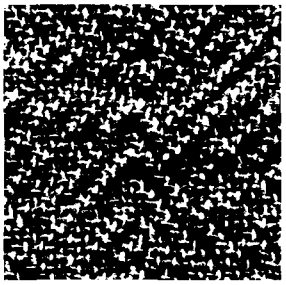
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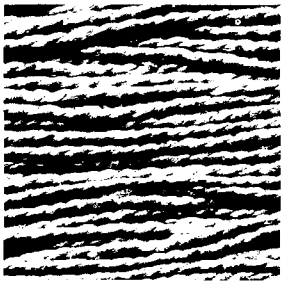
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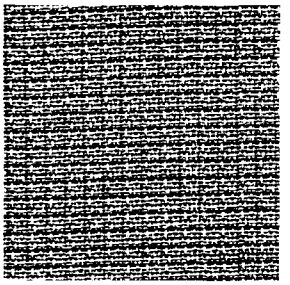
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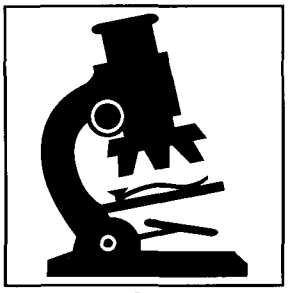
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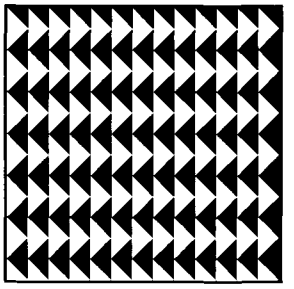
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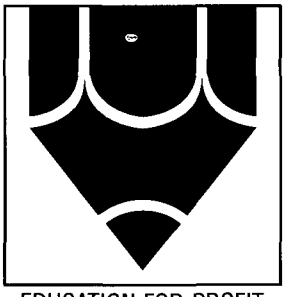
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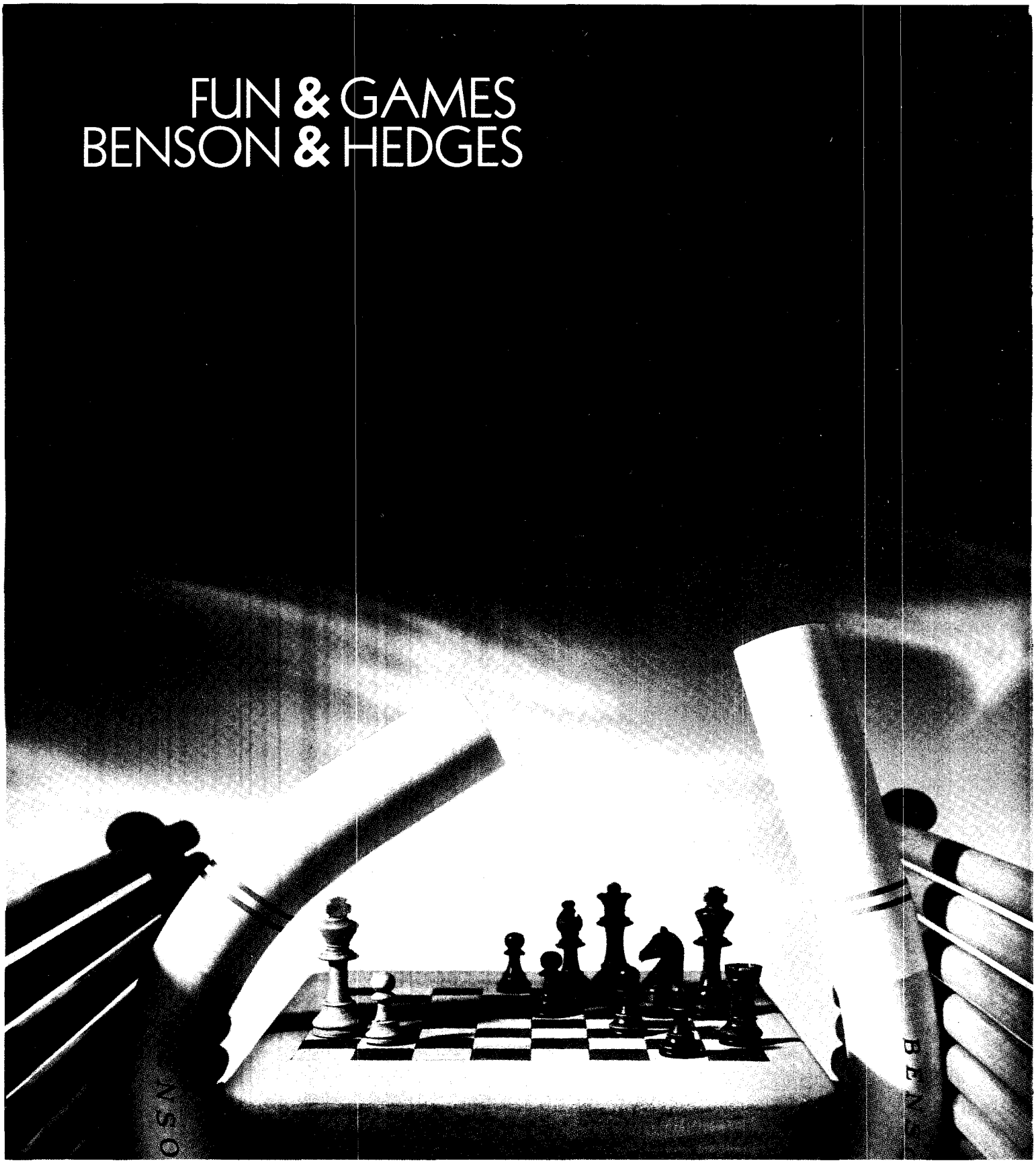

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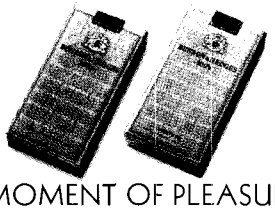

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